THE Nation

VOLUME 143 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • SEPTEMBER 12, 1936 NUMBER 11

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The Shape of Things

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CAMPAIGNS IN AMERICA ARE APT TO BE pretty much one-man affairs. This has never been better illustrated than in the invective and idolatry that have been woven about Mr. Roosevelt. The cause may be somewhere in the American intellectual climate or it may be in the deeper human need for the dramatic symbol. But one consequence of it will go hard for the progressive forces in America. Paul Ward's analysis elsewhere in this issue of the chances for the progressive bloc in the next Congress makes dark reading. When Congress assembles it will be pretty much of a reunion on Capitol Hill. The old faces will be there, and not many of them are turned toward the American future. In the fight for Mr. Roosevelt's reelection, Labor's Non-Partisan League and its allies have tended to forget about Congress. It is natural to concentrate all one's strength on the main objective, and it is natural also that as many conservative Democrats as possible should be pushed to the fore to take the sting out of the President's imputed radicalism. But it is none the less tragic. For Mr. Roosevelt, when reelected, is not likely to go toward the left but toward the right. Only a strong and militant progressive bloc in Congress could function effectively as an opposition and exert pressure on him to fulfil some of the implications of the New Deal. We appeal to American progressives not to forget Congress.

*

LABOR DAY THIS YEAR WAS A CHALLENGE TO both Presidential candidates to say something about labor. Both said it with dignity and good-will. It was good politics for Mr. Landon to deplore the split in the A. F. of L. and equally good politics for Mr. Roosevelt not to mention it. Beyond politics, we found Mr. Roosevelt's statements more satisfying. Mr. Landon reiterated his belief that collective bargaining must be free of "government coercion"—what Mr. Knox, in his more bitter speech, called the government's "iron hand." But Mr. Landon and his running-mate should know that in the present state of bargaining power between the two groups the lack of government protection for labor in its struggle for a living wage could lead only to company unionism or worse. Mr. Roosevelt made it clear that "practical protection" for the worker was a function of government, and that the achievement of economic freedom for all was tied inseparably to the fate of the worker. He showed the same realism in his comments on the drought—the com-

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ments of a man who is notably sensitive to personal experiences. If we had our way every American President would have to make an annual trip of three months through the nation's derelict areas.

*

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON THE STATE OF the nation's finances seems to have taken the wind out of Governor Landon's vague strictures on governmental waste. Owing to a substantial rise in federal revenues, it now appears that the deficit for the coming year will be only $1,500,000,000—or a little more than half the amount of the last two years of the Hoover Administration. Of this amount, approximately $560,000,000 can be attributed to the soldiers' bonus, which was twice vetoed by the President, leaving a net deficit of somewhat less than a billion dollars on the regular and emergency budgets. Considering the fact that relief needs have diminished but slightly and that many of the public-works projects are just beginning to be costly, the President's budget undoubtedly errs on the side of economy rather than extravagance. If Landon were elected, he might, like Roosevelt, make a few gestures toward economy in the early days of his Administration, but there is no reason to believe that he would come nearer to balancing the budget than Roosevelt will. Landon has asserted that he recognizes the need for "being generous in the spending of money for relief and emergency purposes," and as a first-term President he would find it bad politics to make substantial cuts in any direction. With Hearst behind him, he would be most unlikely to cancel the present Administration's unjustifiable increase in military and naval expenditures. Having lost economy as a talking point, Mr. Landon might as well carry out Mr. Hearst's wishes and conduct a silent campaign.

*

SPAIN'S NEW COALITION CABINET UNDER the leadership of Francisco Largo Caballero appears to have instilled new life into the government's military forces. Less than three days after its appointment, the Madrid people's militia is reported to have inflicted a decisive defeat on the important rebel column advancing on Toledo and to have reentered Talavera de la Reina. The government also appears to have scored an important victory near Malaga, and to be pressing hard on both Oviedo and Huesca. Although these successes have been partially offset by the loss of Irun and Fuenterrabia, the fact that the government has definitely taken the offensive in the south is indicative of a greatly improved situation. The appointment of General José Asensio as commander-in-chief of all the loyalist forces in the Madrid area makes possible a coordination in the government's efforts which was hitherto lacking. Caballero's reputation as leader of the extreme left wing of the Socialist Party is being seized upon in many quarters as final proof of the "red" character of the Popular Front regime. Actually, however, Caballero appears to have been chosen not because of his left opinions, but because he seemed to be capable of offering the most vigorous leadership at the present moment. In addition to representatives of the various Marxist parties, which are undoubtedly the most powerful in Spain at this time, the new Cabinet contains proportionate representation from all the more moderate groups in the Popular Front, including the Left Republican, Republican Union, Catalonian Esquerra, and Basque Nationalist parties. As such it seems admirably devised for rescuing the country from the depths to which it has been plunged by indecisive, incompetent republican leadership.

*

BLUM'S ATTEMPT TO MAINTAIN NEUTRALITY toward Spain's life-and-death struggle with fascism has already nullified the auspicious beginning which his government enjoyed as a result of his successful mediation in the strike crisis. The entire working-class section of the Front Populaire—Communists, left Socialists, and trade unions—are angered by what they consider a betrayal of France's duty to extend aid to the Spanish government as permitted by international law. On September 7 the metal workers of Paris, 200,000 strong, carried out a one-hour strike as warning to the government of more vigorous protests to come. At recent large mass-meetings Blum, formerly exceedingly popular, has been greeted with a concert of cries urging aid for Spain. As sponsor of the neutrality proposal, Blum finds himself in an extremely difficult position as it becomes evident that both Germany and Italy are continuing their illegal aid to the rebels. Repudiation of neutrality not only would involve serious loss of face for the Premier personally but might conceivably precipitate, as he insists, a general European war. A rigorous enforcement of neutrality, on the other hand, might lead to a rebel victory in Spain that would plunge France into a civil conflict in which all the odds favored the fascists. Although either step involves great danger, a strong leader would probably run the lesser risk of calling Hitler's and Mussolini's bluff.

*

AT NURNBERG HALF A MILLION GERMANS are gathered for the Nazis' fourth annual Party Congress. The congress opens as we go to press, but we may confidently predict that the dominant note throughout will be a call to arms against communism. And not only in the figurative sense. The half-million who have been herded there will listen to speeches rousing them to a pitch of chauvinism and hatred of "bolshevism." They will also watch the army stage a sham battle in which no true Nazi will have any doubt as to the identity of the enemy. As every stroke of recent German foreign policy has indicated, the enemy is the Soviet Union. It is not expected that there will be any new Jew-baiting decrees such as were the sensation of last year's congress. Laws announced in loud tones and written down in black and white bring forth unfavorable reaction from abroad. The party has learned how to achieve the same results with less publicity. Since the end of the Olympics it has steadily and ruthlessly been making every profession *Judenfrei;* Jewish merchants and industrialists, great and small, are being forced to sell their businesses, Jewish employees are being

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discharged. The campaign against the Jews has now entered its worst stage—their noiseless annihilation through slow and persistent economic pressure.

*

ALTHOUGH THE CRUSHING DEFEAT OF THE Liberal Party in Quebec does not portend a national repudiation of the Liberals, it has set the political pendulum swinging wildly. Quebec Liberalism has been the mainstay of federal Liberalism in that it has regularly provided 50 per cent or more of Liberal representation at Ottawa. But while Liberalism in the other provinces has more or less lived up to its name, in Quebec, under the domination of the Catholic church, it has been of another vintage altogether. For forty years, under the unbroken sway of the Liberals, Quebec was the most backward province in Canada, the masses living in almost unbelievable degradation. Their discontent, repressed so effectively by the Catholic church, has finally burst forth and swept in the Union National Party headed by Maurice Duplessis. United only by a common opposition to the former Taschereau regime, L'Union Nationale is a hodgepodge of everything from the ordinary garden variety of liberal to the outright fascist. Its program is dominated by French Canadian nationalism and for the rest is based on the usual paraphernalia of middle-class demagogy. For Canada as a whole the significance of the Quebec elections —and of those in Manitoba, which had similar results— lies in the weakening of the Liberals. Whether it will be the Conservatives, or third-party groups like the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation or Social Credit, who will gain most from the Liberal loss, it is still difficult to say.

*

THE LARGE MILK DISTRIBUTORS HAVE FOR some time been runners-up with the power companies in the great Consumer Unpopularity Contest. The present struggle in New York City has resulted in a rise of one cent a quart to consumers and an increase of about twenty-five cents per hundredweight of fluid milk in the rates paid to producers. The independent farmers, under the leadership of Felix and Stanley Piseck, are demanding a basic price of $3 a hundredweight; so far the large distributors have granted a price of $2.87. But the farmer, after deducting freight differentials and the loss on "surplus" milk, is receiving considerably less than $2 a hundredweight. There are forty-seven quarts of fluid milk to a hundred pounds; a one-cent increase to the consumer, therefore, means additional revenue of forty-seven cents a hundredweight to the Borden and Sheffield companies. This would seem to be ample not only to protect the high salaries of milk-company officials and the poor, long-suffering stockholders, but to grant more than the highest price so far demanded by the farmers. Undoubtedly the farmers are underpaid for the milk they sell; but this does not mean that the consumer should have to pay more. The percentage which is taken up by middlemen operating between farmer and consumer has always been a public scandal. Milk as a public utility, sold by the city, is the answer. The cooperation of the New York Department of Health in inducing several thousand stores to continue to sell milk at the old price of eleven cents a quart points the way.

*

THE REPUBLICANS HAVE BEEN AWAITING the labor of the *Literary Digest* mountain with evidently bated breath. But the mouse that the straw vote has brought forth must give them small comfort. Twenty-four thousand votes from four states have been counted. The states are Maine, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. But no large cities were included. The results mean, therefore, that so far 1,800 Maine farmers who voted in the *Digest* poll are for Landon; rural New Jersey and Pennsylvania seem to be going for Landon, too; and—wonder of wonders—so does upstate New York! All this we might have known without the poll. The *Digest* deplores the fact that the large groups of unemployed workers who are now on New Deal relief, and who may be expected to vote themselves more of the same, cannot be reached by the straw vote. They would make Mr. Roosevelt's chances look better. But from the returns on the *Digest* poll so far there is small reason to believe that his chances are not still pretty good.

*

MAGISTRATE CHARLES SOLOMON OF Brooklyn, New York, has introduced a pleasing reform in the matter of bail for pickets. Pickets are often arrested too late for their cases to be tried in day court; magistrates sitting in night court have often set bail as high as $500. Frequently the defendant does not appear at night court; the bail is a routine procedure insuring the appearance of the defendant the next day. But as a result unions often find themselves hard pressed to raise the necessary funds, and high bail has on occasion been instrumental in breaking strikes. Magistrate Solomon, acting on the belief that pickets are not criminals and that they never fail to appear at the proper time, has lately begun to impose bail of $1. Fourteen pickets whose cases were brought before him a few days ago were released on bail of $14. The best part of this sensible and fair-minded procedure is that other magistrates are beginning to imitate it. Although Magistrate Solomon's bargain price has not been met, bail for the horrendous offense of being a member of a union picket line is coming down.

*

TELEVISION HAS HOLLYWOOD WORRIED. While everyone else is worrying about war in Europe or the chances of the Giants, the film leaders fear that the threatened advent of television may render the cinema obsolete—as obsolete as today rendered yesterday. But they are fretting needlessly. Television, with all its knobs and gadgets, can never be half as funny as the movies—even without counting King Kong. Can television ever hope to give us a phrase like "Second Smash Week"? Or create a sound like the roar of the MGM trademark? Or produce a new blonde that can compete with Platinum?

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Or the trailers—not tin-can tourist trailers, but Coming-Next-Week trailers—those breathless previews without which neighborhood (ninth run) movie houses wouldn't be able to stretch a two-hour show into a three-and-a-half-hour orgy? And then we have the movies to thank for the Cycle, the Close-up, and Fan magazines. For the Child Star, Will Hays, Frankenstein, and Westerns. For Double Feature, Bank Nite, and Screeno. For Super-Epics and Extra-Colossal-Spectacles. No, Hollywood need not worry, and even if television comes to the home, it will never keep us from those cathedrals of the cinema where sparkle the magic letters: "Also M. Mouse."

A Reply to Dorothy Thompson

IT IS only natural that the Republican Party should seek to make a campaign issue out of the 1936 corporation-tax bill. Here is a measure which in principle and effect is undoubtedly offensive not only to "economic royalists" but to all who believe in the sacredness of the profit motive. It is intolerable because it plugs up the last great leak in the income-tax law and makes fairly certain that in the future the income-tax burden will be closely proportionate to ability to pay.

Since the average voter is not very likely to get excited over the fact that wealthy stockholders will no longer be able to dodge their taxes, Republican tactics have been to becloud the issue as much as possible. With a fine display of logic Governor Landon described the tax law as "cock-eyed," and declared that it tied "a millstone around the neck of the little fellow." Other Republican spokesmen have inveighed against the bill, but have been very careful to avoid particulars. Ridicule and invective may not be sound in formal debates, but they are excellent weapons in political controversy.

Unfortunately for the Republicans, an outsider with more courage than discretion has inadvertently let the cat out of the bag. Writing in the staunchly Republican New York *Herald Tribune* of September 3, Dorothy Thompson attempts to show by specific illustration how iniquitous the tax bill actually is. The illustration is well chosen and on the surface carries a certain degree of plausibility. She tells of "a small but highly efficient industry in New England," situated in a small town, which pulled through the depression with a debt of $250,000. During the past year the company has prospered again, and promises to show a net profit of approximately $500,000. Then begins the sad story of what will become of these profits. To quote Miss Thompson:

> One hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars must be repaid to the bank. Working capital for increased output and increased employment during the current year will take another $175,000. The state income tax will take $10,000 and the federal income tax will take $73,500. That will leave $106,500 presumably for the payment of dividends and for beginning a new reserve. But the undistributed-profits tax steps in here. It adds just $94,500 to the tax load. For repaying its debts the industry will be taxed 20½ per cent of what it pays; for increasing pay rolls and employment it will be further taxed 20½ per cent on what it diverts to this purpose. And when it is all added together a company which showed a profit of $500,000 will have left to distribute in dividends and to build up reserves against a rainy day precisely $12,000.

In order to avoid controversy on non-essentials we will assume Miss Thompson's figures to be correct—though according to our computation the excess-profits tax would be nearer $87,000. Taken as it stands, her illustration is very useful in portraying the principles behind the bill. The company may be a genuine one, but it has apparently been selected because it seems to show that the profits have been entirely eaten up by the wicked undistributed-profits tax. Actually, very few corporations are likely to divert 96 per cent of their profits, after deducting taxes, to new investment and debt retirement. The company, let it be noted, is not exactly a "small" business. A concern which earns $500,000 in a single season would be valued, under prevailing rates of interest, at ten to twelve million dollars—not a great corporation but none the less far removed from the struggling shopkeeper class.

It will be observed that the company has approximately $417,000 in profits available for dividends after payment of federal and state income taxes. If the directors choose to distribute this whole amount in dividends, it will have no further taxes to pay, but each of the stockholders will have to pay full income tax on the receipts. If 10 per cent —or approximately $42,000—is withheld from the stockholders, the corporation will have a tax of only $2,940, leaving $39,000 for debt retirement or surplus in addition to dividends of $375,000. But instead the company chooses to make a new investment of $175,000—which like all investments provides "increased output and increased employment." In other words, the stockholders are choosing to invest their profits before they are distributed to them in the hope of thereby earning larger profits next year. This, of course, is perfectly legitimate. But under the old law this was a very neat way of investing one's profits without the formality of paying an income tax on the money reinvested. Since an overwhelming proportion of the corporation stock in the country is held by extremely wealthy men, it meant that a large part of the true income of this class was being reinvested before the progressive income tax was collected. Miss Thompson is very moderate in her selection; she could have chosen a company that devoted all its earnings to capital investment, thus eliminating dividends altogether.

Much the same can be said of the $135,000 paid back to the bank. There was no compulsion to make a payment of this size. A corporation earning $500,000 a year would have no difficulty in extending all or part of a note for $250,000 as long as it liked. But the stockholders naturally desire to clear off this liability as soon as possible, and they vote to use part of their earnings to retire the debt. If they chose to pay it back in small instalments they could avoid the tax, but they weigh the alternatives and decide that rather than receive the money, pay an income tax on the dividends, and reinvest the returns, it

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would be cheaper to pay off the debt. That is a simple matter of business judgment. If the shareholders choose to use the bulk of their earnings in these two ways, they must set aside approximately $80,000 to compensate for the income tax that would otherwise be paid. This leaves only about $26,000, and apparently the stockholders have decided that cash in the corporation till is more desirable than in their own pockets; hence the additional tax. That again is their business.

But how is the additional capital "for increased output and increased employment" to be obtained? Will not the tax tend, as Miss Thompson declares, "to freeze all industry in the present pattern"? The answer, of course, is that where there is genuine opportunity for expansion, industry will get the capital as it always has—by issuing new stock, by floating bonds, by taking advantage of the present low interest rates and borrowing from the banks, or, as in the present instance, by appropriation out of surplus after payment of tax. Capital has never been so plentiful or so cheap. The tax bill imposes no restriction on industrial expansion. It merely requires that the owner of the capital pay his income tax before the money is invested. And it serves as a sorely needed protection against the accumulation of unused surpluses which was a primary cause of the depression.

Dakota Wants Shakespeare

In a town of 1,000 people, 800 tried to get in to see "The Dictator," the first play ever given in that community.

A majority of the adults . . . report that they had seen no living actors for many years.

These three Federal Theater units, a dramatic company and two vaudeville groups, have played to 18,000 school children in Omaha and its suburbs. Ninety per cent, according to the statistical studies made by the director, had never seen a play, and could not believe that these actors were really not moving pictures. They clapped until the actors had to give eight curtain calls, and even then the children refused to go home.

WE HAVE been quoting from an article by Hallie Flanagan, national director of the Federal Theater Project, published in the project's monthly bulletin—a thirty-page mimeographed sheet in which the theater in all its phases comes alive with such force as to set first-night dilettantes and dowagers shaking in their swallowtails and ermine capes. Here is a swaggering, pushing, vigorous theater, lineal descendant of the early American troupers, giving its performances in public parks, cavorting in circuses ("The only reason we don't have elephants in this show is that none were on relief), reviving vaudeville, setting marionettes dancing in a score of cities; and yet tackling with the same verve and with great success the intellectual niceties of T. S. Eliot, or combining Macbeth with Harlem and creating something new and satisfying.

The Federal Theater Project was designed to succor starving actors. Like the Federal Art Project it has loosed spring torrents of theatrical interest and talent, which are already seeping into Broadway.

It is impossible, in a brief account, to do more than touch upon the numerous activities of the project. Suffice to say that some 10,000 professional theatrical people are taking part in it all over the United States. Its productions are playing to large audiences, which are described as distinctly new audiences as far as the theater is concerned—admissions, when they are not free, range from 25 to 55 cents. Experimentation is going on in every branch of the theater from play-writing to stage lighting. The flesh-and-blood actor is being restored to the American scene. Vaudeville is being revived—certainly the lack of any striking new comic talent in the past few years is due in part to the wiping out of vaudeville, in which our best comedians have been trained. In its work with and for children the Federal Theater Project has broken new ground and is already achieving important results.

The Federal Theater would be worth while—and like the art project its budget is small in proportion to its effect—if only for the service it is undoubtedly performing in setting up active participation and local interest in the theater to counteract the deadly passivity that reigns in the plush seats of air-cooled movie palaces. In this connection a few notes on censorship are worth making. Early in the history of the project the issue rose very sharply in New York—as might have been expected. Lately it has risen in another guise. It is announced that on October 20 the Federal Theater will offer throughout the country twenty simultaneous productions of Sinclair Lewis's "It Can't Happen Here," which Hollywood refused to sponsor. For our final note on censorship we are indebted to the research bureau of the project, which is busy cataloguing plays in the attempt to supply, by return mail if possible, the demands of actors' groups for exactly the right production for the given locale. The bureau has unearthed what appears to be the first comic opera written in America. Its name is "The Disappointment." It was printed in 1767, but it will be produced for the first time probably this winter. "The Disappointment," it seems, was never produced in its time because it satirized some prominent Philadelphians and fell foul of the censor.

The Vatican's New Crusade

THERE could be no clearer declaration of the policy of the Catholic church toward its "children" and their relation with the temporal world than was contained in the comment of the *Osservatore Romano,* the Vatican's newspaper, on the activities of Father Coughlin. In the measured periods of the statement could be heard the voice of Mother Church speaking across many generations and many governments, sure in the knowledge that humanity would stop in its tracks and

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listen. But if its tone was pitched above the battle, its content got down to cases with all the temporal energy of a ward politician.

Father Coughlin's conduct, it intoned, was improper because "an orator who inveighs against persons who represent the supreme social authorities, with the evident danger of shaking the respect that the people owe to those authorities, sins against the elementary proprieties." "The Holy See wants respect for all liberties but for all proprieties as well." Lest the world fail to understand, the Holy See, like any other regime, has unofficial spokesmen who fill in the lines. Thus it was "stressed" "in high Vatican circles" that while the Vatican did not approve Father Coughlin's attack on Mr. Roosevelt, it does approve the work he has done in interpreting the Pope's encyclicals on economic matters. The Vatican, "it was pointed out," does not want to see the respect of the masses for their authorities shaken by such an attack as that on Roosevelt. What happens when the masses lose respect for their authorities, the prelates said, now may be seen in Spain.

To the extent that the church is mighty it need not be consistent. It is necessarily on the side of the angels. But there is an inconsistency in its latest statement as big as the shell holes in Spanish churches, and its name is Soviet Russia. There the disrespectful masses went so far as to set up new social authorities against whom the church itself is now waging bitter warfare. Mother Church is obviously worried. The most recent pronouncements from the Vatican have been marked by the desperation hitherto reserved for temporal governments fearful of being overthrown. The Catholic chant against communism is rising stronger and stronger. It is no accident that the 10,000 alumni of Notre Dame University have dedicated themselves to an anti-red crusade; there is no doubt that Father Coughlin's perorations will center more and more on the Communist menace—they have been tending in that direction for some time, and Bishop Gallagher stands squarely behind him on this issue. There is already evidence that the church will not hesitate, when the moment comes, to align itself with that other great red-baiting force, German fascism. "Another set of laws," writes Frederick T. Birchall from Berlin, "previously expected, depriving Catholic orders of the right to teach are understood to have been stricken from the program as the result of the recent pastoral letter in which the Catholic church indorsed Hitler's stand against bolshevism." These are important and ominous developments.

Under the great concept of the right to liberty of conscience the Catholic church has built up in this country a tremendous vested interest in money and influence. To judge by recent announcements, it is now preparing to turn that power, as it has never done before, to the task of combating "communism." We have had more than enough proof that communism in this context means liberty of conscience, nothing more nor less. The alumni of Notre Dame would be well advised to stick to football as an outlet for their predatory instincts. As for Father Coughlin, he has a well-earned reputation as a sower of wind; he has not yet displayed the lineaments of a reaper of whirlwinds.

"The Truth Shall Make You Free"

READING the news stories of the discussions at the Harvard Tercentenary Conference, the layman knows that about mathematics he knows nothing, about the stars he knows somewhat less, and the intricacies of the higher logic are a closed book to him. Nevertheless, the spectacle of the ivory tower bending to examine the creature man in all his aspects cannot fail to be an impressive one. The scholars who are meeting at Cambridge are chosen from the best of the world; the internationalism of thought was never more convincingly demonstrated. England and the United States have sent their representatives, as have France, Italy, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Japan, Norway, Brazil, and many other countries. Unlike the regrettable demonstration at Heidelberg, politics here play no part. And contemporaneity is relegated to its proper place in the stream of history.

The keynote of the meetings was the speech of the medievalist, Professor Etienne Gilson of Paris. "There is a spiritual order of realities," he said, "whose absolute right it is to judge even the state, and eventually to free us from its oppression." The medieval world was unified not only by a common faith in God but by a belief in "the universal character of rational truth itself." For a thousand years the ideas of Aristotle as expounded by Thomas Aquinas were the yardstick by which man measured the worth and the meaning of his actions. When the authority of the church was challenged and largely fell, this unity dissolved into a group of nationalisms, of local philosophies, of conflicting ideas of statehood and behavior. In the twentieth century we shall probably not go back whole-souled to Aristotle; we shall have to invent our own rational and universal truth. But when we find it, the problems of fascism and communism, of economic crash and boom, will fall into a pattern in which also will appear the mosaics of individual obligation and allegiance.

This is rendering Professor Gilson rather freely, but the gist of his remarks are here. And the challenge to scholarship which he offers is clear enough. In the last few centuries our universities have shown themselves unwilling or unable to think except as separate entities, largely unrelated to the immediate needs of men in general; the physical scientists provide in some respects an honorable exception, but even science is threatened by dogmas of race and polity. What we must do in the reordering of a chaotic world is not only act but think and learn. We have had men of action who allowed their procedure to be governed solely by the needs of the moment: the largest navy in the world has been one result; a ruinous tariff has been another. We have had philosophic systems which nobody understood but their author. The universal truth which Professor Gilson hopes may spell salvation must be altogether different. It remains to be seen how much our universities can contribute to its formulation.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Senator Couzens

Still the Same Congress

Washington, September 7

THE political monotheism that sweeps over this country in Presidential election years is having in 1936 its usual effect of killing off all chances for the development in Congress of the strong, cohesive, and disciplined progressive bloc which the nation always has needed and now needs more desperately than ever. The concentration of the electorate's attention on the race between the two major-party nominees, a concentration fostered and kept fixed by straw votes and party propaganda, again is preparing the way for the return to Congress of essentially all the shysters, demagogues, free-seed peddlers, chauvinists, Jew-haters, red-baiters, and lobby leeches who have dominated past Congresses, Republican or Democratic. It is easy for this gang to slip back into their places at the legislative machine's controls, with the voters lost in frenzied adoration of one or the other of the year's man-made gods, Roosevelt and Landon.

For every Blanton or Huddleston defeated and every Maverick or Marcantonio reelected there will be a dozen Copelands, Baileys, McFarlanes, Kramers, Robinsons, Bilbos, Tinkhams, Treadways, Robsions, Mays, Shorts, Hastings, Hales, Fishes, and O'Connors returned to Congress on November 3. And the proportions will not vary greatly from those of late years. If there is any material change at all, it is likely to be in the direction of a reduction in the progressive bloc and a more than commensurate increase in the conservative to reactionary ranks in Congress. That is bound to happen in the unlikely event that the Hearst-Landon-Liberty League crowd succeed in ousting the Roosevelt Administration. It is only slightly less likely in the event of another Roosevelt landslide, for the great majority of the men who are coming back to Congress under the Democratic banner have no taste for the New Deal's avowed objectives. That is especially true of the Democrats who are certain of reelection and who, because of their seniority in the House and Senate, will monopolize the important committee posts. I refer, of course, to Democrats from the "solid South." Does anybody think that Robinson, Harrison, and Glass, for example, are New Dealers at heart and—to use the simplest definition of what is supposed to be the underlying principle of the New Deal—can be depended on to champion human rights over property rights? And is anybody so misguided as to think that the string of victories piled up by "New Dealers" in the primaries are veritable New Deal victories? They indicate nothing more than that the majority of the voters are heartily in favor of the Roosevelt who was presented to them on Inauguration Day in 1933 and who remains the same Roosevelt to them today because his enemies—the du Ponts, Sloans, Hearsts, McCormicks, and the rest—keep telling them that he has not changed.

Imagine, in view of that situation, how delightful it is for machine candidates for Congress to be able to avoid concrete issues and, taking their stand on the Roosevelt myth, to run for reelection on the plea that votes for them are not votes for them personally but votes in defiance of Roosevelt's enemies and in vindication of the President. Their resultant triumphs at the polls do not change their private allegiances any more than victory on a platform of mother-love would convert them all into impeccable sons and husbands. Furthermore, many of them are having what little fearful respect they feel for the electorate's New Deal inclinations dimmed by the inevitable campaign-year upsurge of opposition to those in power; and seeking to compromise with that opposition, they are being driven into positions more conservative than they held in the Seventy-third and Seventy-fourth Congresses.

Nor can it be said that Roosevelt or any of his most enthusiastic allies have made any substantial effort toward ameliorating the Congressional trend which promises to keep the progressive bloc at best in statu quo. Labor's Non-Partisan League, which might have been expected to take effective steps in that direction, has thoroughly shirked the responsibility, fearing that any intrusion into the Congressional field would split the labor vote and detract from Roosevelt's support. To that extent it has reduced itself for the time being at least to about as hopeful an incubator for a genuine third-party movement as the Business Men's League for Roosevelt which is in process of parturition with—reputedly—Walter Chrysler as one of its leaders. The other third-party nuclei friendly to Roose-

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velt are on a comparable plane. The La Follette group is running around in circles, with the La Follettes themselves dodging any firm alliances with definitely leftist groups for fear of antagonizing their liberal-conservative support. Unanimity is achieved in this circle only on the point of supporting Roosevelt. In Minnesota the Democrats have put up weak candidates in exchange for the Farmer-Labor Party's support of Roosevelt and then have seen that support disorganized by the death of Governor Olson and the resultant scramble among his political heirs and assigns for new positions on the party ladder. As a result of that scramble two Farmer-Labor seats in Congress have been placed in jeopardy, with Ernest Lundeen, who has never been able to carry the state but was certain of carrying his Congressional district, being removed from his race for reelection to the House and placed in nomination for the Senate seat which Olson had had cinched. One heartening feature may be noted in passing, and that is that two third-party movements—the Townsendite and Coughlinite, or Lemke Union Party, movements—plainly are making no headway.

As for Roosevelt himself, his aid to the progressives has been negligible. To be sure, he has used his best efforts to persuade Senator Norris to run again in Nebraska, and he sought to make Couzens take the Democratic nomination for the Senate in Michigan, but neither gesture was made at any cost to himself; in fact, both were directed as much toward insuring his own political fortunes in the states at issue as toward keeping Norris and Couzens in the Senate. It is true, too, that he made some slight gesture toward aiding Maverick in his campaign for renomination in Texas. But consider the other side of the picture. In Maine his man Farley literally begged an anti-New Deal Democrat, Brann, to run for the Senate merely to increase the chance of a Democratic Party victory in Maine September 14, with a resulting psychological enhancement of Roosevelt's chances throughout the country in November. For similar reasons he did not lift a finger to bring about the defeat of Glass, who is coming back to the Senate and, now that his senior, Senator Fletcher of Florida, is dead, will take over the chairmanship of the Banking and Currency Committee. Nor did Roosevelt so much as move to throw his weight against the renomination of Senator Bailey in North Carolina, although Bailey has been well described by the leading group of Roosevelt supporters in that state, the Liberal Democrats of North Carolina, in a statement by their president, Dr. W. O. House. To emphasize the "Democratic above all else" character of his group, Dr. House asserted that its members "will even vote for the arrogant, insulting anti-New Deal Josiah William Bailey for Senator because he is on the Democratic ticket." And Roosevelt's chief ally in Massachusetts is the indefensible Governor Curley, a candidate for the Senate.

If you think I exaggerate the atmosphere of obscurity and neglect in which the Congressional campaign is proceeding, let me invite you to try to inform yourself upon its progress. Consult the files of your local newspapers and try to learn the primary results in the various states, and if you doubt the comprehensive qualities of your favorite newspaper, go to your public library and consult the files of all the papers there. You will find not only that they fail to cover in anything approaching realistic fashion the Congressional campaigns and primary results throughout the country; you also will find that they fail to cover them in their own states. You will be hard pressed to discover complete figures on the party vote in each district, and you will be even more hard pressed to discover what sort of men are winning the nominations, why they won, and what forces they beat. When you have made that discovery, come down to Washington and consult the Democratic and Republican Congressional campaign committees and the Washington correspondents who are supposed to be profoundly informed as to the play of political forces and personalities in the states where are published the papers they represent here. These journalists in the great majority of cases will tell you they know next to nothing about the Congressional contests in their states because their papers pay little or no attention to them, and the party committees will be, if anything, less informative.

It is only by the most laborious ferreting that you will be able to piece together the Congressional picture for 1936, and even then you will have to depend on cold statistics. Those figures, however, are sufficient in themselves to show how small is the prospect of any material change in the complexion of either house. They are based on the primaries which have been held to date in thirty-six states. Primaries or nominating conventions have not yet been completed in Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington. In the thirty-six states where the party tickets are complete, nominations for 315 House and 28 Senate seats were involved, and in all but 56, or 16.4 per cent, of the 343 cases those who held the seats at the Seventy-fourth Congress won renomination. It would be pleasant to report that those fifty-six changes were effected by the voters, but ten of them were due to deaths and twenty-seven to retirements, leaving only nineteen resulting from the defeat of incumbents. All nineteen defeats were suffered by Democrats who, of course, were defeated by other Democrats who in the great majority of cases professed themselves to be as good or better New Dealers than the men seeking renomination. The number of defeats suffered by the 306 incumbents seeking renomination amounted to only 6.2 per cent of the total, and lest undue significance be attached to the fact that all the fallen were Democrats, the point must be made that 78 per cent of the 306 men and women seeking renomination were Democrats and only 22 per cent Republicans. Five of the nineteen who met defeat were anti-Long Democrats in Louisiana; they were beaten by pro-Long Democrats in a primary held soon after Huey Long's death but not before the Long machine had made peace with the New Deal. The others who went down to defeat were Representatives Claiborne of Missouri, Duffey and Fiesinger of Ohio, Gassaway of Oklahoma, Richardson, Berlin, Brooks, and Moritz of Pennsylvania, Blanton of Texas, Huddleston of Alabama, Hoeppel of California, Sears of Florida, and Darden of Virginia. None of them was a member of the

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progressive bloc in the House and none represents an irreparable loss to the national fortunes. On the other hand, among their conquerors there is not a single likely addition to the progressive bloc.

There remains here only space enough to point out that the Democrats cannot possibly lose control of the Senate. There are only thirty-six Senate seats to be filled in November, of which at present twenty-three are held by Democrats, twelve by Republicans, and one by a Farmer-Laborite, Benson. The Democrats are certain of recapturing eighteen of them because they are seats from Democratic strongholds. They have a definite edge in the race for four others and at least a fighting chance in nine. When these facts are added to the fact that the Democrats held seventy out of the ninety-six Senate seats in the last Congress, it becomes apparent that they are certain of keeping sixty-five of them in the next Congress and possibly may run their total up to seventy-eight.

How Dead Is Liberalism?

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THE more often a thing is said and the more commonly it is accepted the less likely we are to ask precisely what it is that we mean when we find ourselves accepting it. Sometimes everyone seems to agree upon some formulating phrase because everyone is either giving it a private meaning of his own or letting it pass without asking whether or not it actually signifies anything at all.

"Liberalism is dead." So many people who seem to agree upon nothing else have agreed to accept these three sweeping words that one is justified in suspecting the simplicity of the phrase as the reason for the agreement, and it occurred to me that it might be interesting to ask the people whom I met on a recent visit to Paris and London precisely what it meant to them when they used it themselves or allowed it to pass unchallenged when uttered in their presence. How much, in the first place, does the statement include? How many of the institutions, convictions, and ideals loosely associated with the term "liberalism" are thus certified to have passed beyond human aid? And just how dead, in the second place, are we supposed to assume that each of them is? Are they dead completely and forever or, as some a bit too facilely assume, only pro tem? Which of them are to be dismissed as discarded experiments or exploded myths; which stand for something eternally desirable and either to be returned to at some happier time or approached from some new direction?

Certainly the Communist and the fascist would be the first to insist that their agreement is merely verbal and that they differ almost as much over what it is that is dead as over the question of what should replace it. But as I had suspected before and as I discovered upon question, members of the various subdivisions of the left also disagree among themselves in ways which are, perhaps, even more important for the very reason that they are less obvious, and that—if I may force the metaphor—the various doctors who sign the same death certificate have actually been examining a different corpse.

"Liberalism" obviously means different things to different persons, and, more especially, it includes very much more in the minds of some than it does in the minds of others. I know, therefore, no better way of beginning a discussion like the present than by listing some of the meanings which the term may have. When anyone says, "Liberalism is dead," he may be meaning to assert that the world is done for good with any one or more of the following: (1) the Liberal Party of Great Britain; (2) the doctrine of economic laissez faire; (3) a political method of which the essentials are universal suffrage, free speech, and an insistence upon the maintenance of civil liberties at all times; (4) a philosophy of which the foundations were laid in the eighteenth century and which includes a belief in the natural goodness of man, in the doctrine of equal rights, and in the existence of a natural tendency toward progress wherever freedom is maintained; (5) what may more properly be called the liberal temperament—a quasi-aesthetic preference for freedom and variety over discipline and conformity and a tendency to regard them as ends in themselves.

In actual practice people have been found saying that liberalism is dead and meaning to affirm by that statement everything from a mere belief that the Liberal Party of Great Britain has ceased to be an effective force to the very inclusive conviction, which seems sometimes to be shared by some Communists and some fascists, that the whole tendency to regard the individual as important and individual opinion or action as even interesting is fundamentally pernicious. Hence the tendency to agree that liberalism is dead is the source of far more confusion than it is of clarification, and any man who wants to be understood will refuse either to affirm or to deny it. He will not take refuge in any statement so monstrously vague but will say instead exactly what are the methods, or institutions, or convictions, or preferences which the world, in his opinion, is done with at last.

Ten years ago one would, I think, have met more widely divergent answers to these questions than one is likely to get very often today. Many fascists, to be sure, would doubtless still use the phrase in the most absolute possible sense, but outside the ranks of such it would be much more difficult to find anyone willing to take a position so extreme or so simple. The most ardent advocates of proletarian dictatorship are usually anxious to explain that such a dic-

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tatorship is at best a temporary expedient, and though that has, I believe, been always the official Communist position, there is no mistaking the shift which has taken place in emphasis. There is, for example, no disputing the fact that the new Russian constitution is a gesture at least, even though it may possibly turn out to be no more than that, and the gesture is inspired by a sentiment plainly evident in many other quarters. Communists of all parties are much more anxious than they formerly were to emphasize their positive aims and to picture the new society in terms far less offensive to the traditional liberal temper than they used to choose. Officially as well as unofficially democratic institutions like universal suffrage are spoken of with greater and greater respect, while at the same time—and this is of perhaps even greater significance—the emphasis upon the determination to distribute the goods of bourgeois society grows at the expense of the determination to substitute others for them. Jazz and cosmetics are no longer frowned upon but supplied generally, so we are told, to the people, and the Communist who a decade ago would have held that an interest in fashionable apparel was evidence of a dead soul today points with pride to the elegance of Moscow dress shops.

At the same time there is an equally evident tendency to regard the higher manifestations of bourgeois culture with similar favor. Eight years ago Eisenstein summed up for me his aesthetic creed somewhat as follows: There are only two kinds of art—bourgeois art, which consists in the imaginative satisfaction of unfulfilled desires, and proletarian art, which is preparation for social change. In the perfect state about to be created there will be no need for any art at all—no need for bourgeois art because there will be no unsatisfied desires, no proletarian art because there will be no more social change. Today Eisenstein is said to have lost official favor, and it would be difficult to find anyone who did not regard such a pronouncement as his as quaintly barbarous, or who would not hold a similar opinion of the statement made some years ago by Robert Briffault, that the entire culture of the past is so poisoned with a devilish ideology that it ought to be withheld in its entirety from the new people. In Russia RAPP is no more; *Pravda* has declared that the spirit of Soviet art is classic; and if a composer like Shastakovich is suddenly liquidated, it must be remembered that he was "revolutionary" and that at least apologists are eager to explain that his sudden disappearance was due, not to the watchfulness of a dictatorship determined to give the people what they ought to have, but to a surprisingly sudden loss of popular favor. Outside Russia even an official publicist for the Russian Communist Party like Ralph Fox is ready to admit to me that perhaps the Soviet government "went too far" in its condemnation of bourgeois artistic ideals, and an independent Communist like André Malraux declares roundly both that Russian literature since the revolution has been nearly worthless and that the revolutionary or non-revolutionary character of a work of art has nothing to do with its subject matter.

Eight years ago the manager of the Moscow theater in which "The Hairy Ape" had been given an eccentric production replied with lofty condescension to my inquiry about "Strange Interlude." The Russian public, she said, could not possibly be interested in such a work because it not only dealt with love but dealt with it as a problem between individuals, while the Communist had passed far beyond any interest in "individual problems." Last winter "Romeo and Juliet" was said to have been one of the most popular plays of the season, and according to a dispatch in an American newspaper, one of the official journals in Russia not only gave its readers editorial permission to fall in love but urged some sort of public reproof for those who showed themselves incapable of this noble emotion. Mr. Fox, whether following the party line or announcing the results of his own lucubrations, assured me that the "problems of the individual" had undoubtedly been given far too little attention in recent Russian literature and that though they were being taken up again, much valuable time had been lost. For almost a generation the Russian citizen had been deprived of that opportunity to know himself which the more intimate sort of literature provides, and the newest writing would necessarily be crudely elementary until the spiritual development of the Russian had caught up with the past from which it had been detached. Indeed, he even went so far as to agree with my more or less fanciful suggestion that the perfect society would, after all, be one in which none but individual problems remained.

It might of course be argued that as the attempt is made in Russia to moderate the rigors of a revolutionary society by the readmission of bourgeois ideals, comforts, and diversions, as well as of bourgeois institutions, the vulgarities of such comforts and diversions as well as the injustice of such institutions must be admitted *pari passu*; that, in a word, the prospect for a sanctified and classless society fades as the convictions of the Communist approach those of the bourgeois liberal. But that is not the subject here under discussion. The fact remains that even the Communist who proclaims that liberalism is dead is far from asserting that the whole complex of institutions and ideals and standards of value associated with the term has been wholly abandoned. And to that extent the differences between him and the liberal democrat have not only diminished but diminished at least as much because the Communist has shifted his emphasis as because the democrat has recognized the working defects of the system he supports.

On the one hand, Bertrand Russell may take his stand upon a position which many would describe as far to the right. He may assure me, for example, that to him the phrase "Liberalism is dead" means no more than that laissez faire as an economic system has been shown not to work. He may go on both to affirm his faith in democracy, his conviction that it has already vastly improved the condition of humanity, and his further conviction that the best hope for the future is in the continual piling up of such small reforms as democracy has accomplished in the past. On the other hand, M. Malraux—and here his position does not seem very different from that of an orthodox Communist Party man—may assert that the whole method of liberalism is dead because it was never alive, that the liberal society never existed except in the minds of sentimentalists. To Mr. Russell's assertion that the citizen of France or Great Britain or the United States who insists that

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nothing can be done now and that he must simply wait for the catastrophe of civil war is merely giving us an excuse for laziness, M. Malraux may oppose the conviction that democracy can never work until it has been reborn after a proletarian dictatorship. But wide as the divergence is, it is not as wide as it might be and not, I am convinced, as wide as that between the typical Communist and the typical democrat was ten years ago. Neither M. Malraux nor Mr. Fox talked about the "workers' civilization" as something beyond the comprehension of the bourgeois democrat. They talked only about the best method of getting in the greatest measure something which, like Mr. Russell, they agreed in thinking worth the having. Perhaps they found more of liberalism dead. But they were obviously as anxious as he that the whole should be restored to life.

To say all this is not to say that the Communist and the liberal are therefore ready to unite as brothers along a common front. The differences between them are profound enough to wreck a world which may find no way of reconciling one with the other. But the agreements are sufficient to limit the particular discussion. The question "How dead is liberalism?" has come to mean—much more clearly than it meant ten years ago—how dead are liberal methods and the faith which intelligent men can have in them? Can liberalism best be served by defending the institutions through which these liberal methods have operated or by consenting that they should be destroyed to make way for others whose outlines can at present be only dimly perceived? In my conversations I met no one whose discussion ranged further afield.

[*This is the first of a series of four articles by Mr. Krutch. The second will appear next week.*]

Doriot—France's Would-be Führer

BY M. E. RAVAGE

Paris, August 20

PIERRE LAVAL, in the days when he was a revolutionary Socialist, uttered words which sound like a prophetic description of his own subsequent career. "The bourgeoisie," he said, "no longer has any men. It is obliged to go and find them in the garbage heap where the proletariat throws its refuse." A more recent example is the case of Jacques Doriot. It has been evident for many months now that all was not quite well in the Croix de Feu camp. The fantastic unfitness of Colonel de la Rocque for the role assigned him was brought home after the elections even to the impresarios of fascism. Therefore these gentlemen, with no time to lose, set about looking for more suitable talent. They found it—or think they found it—in the mayor and deputy of the suburban town of St. Denis, the Communist renegade Doriot. Why he, of all the possible and eager candidates? The answer is that Duke Pozzo di Borgo—until some three weeks ago the Colonel's angel—and his general staff had been looking into the mechanics of the movement which had triumphed in Germany and Italy and which had so inexplicably failed in France. Their studies showed them that the counter-revolution, whenever it got anywhere, was led by a man of the people—in Poland and Italy by ex-Socialists, in Germany by a former workman; while in Spain, for instance, where an army officer tried his hand at the business, it was short-lived. Now Doriot fulfils all the requirements. He is a man of humble origin, has served his political apprenticeship in a proletarian party and in capitalist prisons, knows how to talk to workmen, is well versed in the "social" lingo of which Hitler made such excellent capital, is a determined, intelligent, able fellow, and the U. S. S. R. is anathema to him.

This last is a capital point. The other fascist chieftains could and did rave against "Moscow," but Doriot has the goods on the Soviets. He is an ex-member of the Politburo, has had personal contact with the leaders of the Russian government, and can at least pretend to have inside documentary evidence of the aims and methods of the Comintern. He did a lot of "exposing" of his one-time comrades in the course of the recent elections. Indeed, it was this that in the first instance caused the 200 families to cock their ears in his direction. He possesses other qualifications also for the role he is being cast for. Though the working class and the politically conscious execrate a renegade, the unwary are apt to be drawn toward a "convert" who has seen the light; and Doriot exploits the pretension of being a peace-loving, patriotic—as well as, of course, an anti-capitalist—Frenchman who reluctantly parted company with an Internationale which was bent on involving his country in a war against fascism and for the defense of a foreign power, the Soviet Union. The facts are somewhat more complex and rather less flattering to his rugged sincerity. He was, it is true, forced out of the French Communist Party for a breach of discipline, his advocacy of union with the Socialists before the executive committee had got round to it. But having got out, he did not, like other dissident Communists, join either the Socialists or the P. U. P. (Party of Proletarian Unity). He took the path which Millerand, Laval, and their kind had blazed for him, setting up, first, his own *Doriotiste* machine and then swinging by rapid strides farther and farther to the right. In two years he had bleached completely white, the leading exponent of "integral" nationalism and anti-Sovietism in France.

His past, his versatile conscience, his common touch made him the very man to rally the scattered forces of the counter-revolution into a single movement. No sooner were the elections over than negotiations started. By the middle of July the one-town Doriotist seed blossomed

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out into the Parti Populaire Français, before an audience of dowager marquises, bank directors, tricolor youths of both sexes, and residents of the Faubourg St. Germain, with the blessings, on the following morning, of the entire reactionary press, including the *Action Française* and the *Völkischer Beobachter*. In many circles, notably in Communist ones, Doriot is viewed with apprehension. Doubtless he is more dangerous than the preposterous La Rocque or any of his competitors. For the moment his advent has served to precipitate the collapse of the long-decayed Croix de Feu movement. But while the right-wing elements of this fascist army are flocking to Doriot, the anti-capitalist faction of it, that which took the Colonel's "social" aspirations seriously, is heading in the opposite direction, to the Socialists and the Communists. What is more, both La Rocque and his rivals decline to efface themselves before the new idol of the oligarchy, and having transformed their organizations into political parties to evade the dissolution decree, carry on at the old stand. The immediate result, then, of Doriotism has been but to bring another aspirant into an already overcrowded market. Time alone will tell whether his venture has solid ground under it. If it ever gains any effective following, it will be owing less to Doriot's gifts of leadership than to the dawning crisis in the political and economic life of the republic.

In contemporary Europe a left victory at the polls is not necessarily the prelude to the strengthening or even the preservation of democracy. It may, on the contrary, be the signal for a final and desperate assault by its foes. This is all the more likely to be the case when the democratic forces arrive in office with an audacious program of social and economic reform. In every country where fascism has carried the day its triumph has been preceded by an electoral landslide to the left. The tragic events occurring in Spain today are but the latest and bloodiest instance of the truth that the counter-revolution effectively gets into action only where and when democracy throws down the gauntlet without at the same time boldly and swiftly taking the offensive. Indeed, fascism as a world phenomenon is historically and in its nature the counter-attack of the old order after the first victory of the new. In this sense the French reactionaries were not lying when during the campaign of last spring they warned that if the *Front Populaire* won the election it would mean civil war. It was a veiled hint that the oligarchy and the political parties at its service had no intention of abiding by the will of the people.

Sojourn in Hell

BY JOHANN SCHMIDT

THE concentration camp of Esterwegen, in which I was a prisoner, consists of two inclosures separated by a barbed-wire barricade in which there is a gate. In the smaller inclosure are the offices of the commandant and the administrative officials, garages, kitchen, dining-room, court, bath, and sleeping quarters for about 400 special guards (S. S.). The larger inclosure is the prisoners' camp, containing ten barracks, workshops, kitchen, bath, and court. Around this camp runs the "path of death," a sanded strip about thirty inches wide along which hang warning shields painted with skulls and crossbones. Whoever sets foot on this path may be shot by the sentinel without warning. It is inclosed by wires and barricades, and between these and the outer wall runs another path about forty-five inches wide on which sentinels walk incessantly to and fro. Over the gate between the two inclosures is a tower occupied day and night by a machine-gun unit. There are other towers on the extremities of the camp wall.

The prisoners number from 1,000 to 1,200. They are divided into the following groups:

Criminals. The Nazis classify as criminals persons who within a year receive more than five criminal sentences, including one of a half-year's imprisonment. Such offenders are kept in a concentration camp for two or three years as an additional penalty. The local police decide more or less arbitrarily whether or not a person is to be classified as a criminal, and those so classified have no right of appeal and no other legal right. Criminals and political prisoners do the same work and suffer the same treatment, but wear different uniforms. Conversation between criminals and political prisoners is forbidden, although they work together.

Austrians. Many Austrian Nazis fled to Germany after the revolt of 1934. Some of these were enrolled in German Nazi organizations; the rest formed the Austrian Legion. If one of them was guilty of an infraction of discipline, or was politically suspect, or even showed a desire to go back to a civil profession, he was placed in a concentration camp as a "prisoner of honor." The Austrians at Esterwegen wear special uniforms, and are not obliged to do labor service. They are allowed to give the Hitler salute, and as a visible sign of their "honor" they are permitted to wear shining black leather puttees. But this honor is tenuous. Frequently they become political prisoners. The "prisoners of honor" are strictly forbidden to communicate with the criminals or the political prisoners, but this does not prevent them from begging Jews for half-smoked cigarettes. The Austrians commit most of the infractions of discipline. In special barracks, separated from the others, these National Socialist prisoners of honor show neither honor nor friendship.

Political Prisoners (in "protective custody"). There

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are Communists and Socialists in the camp who have been under "protective" arrest since February, 1933, without having yet been brought to trial. To this group belong Fritz Emmerich, the Communist deputy of the Reichstag; Ernst Heilmann, leader of the Socialist faction; Kurt Eisner, son of the former Minister-President of Bavaria; and Karl von Ossietsky, the well-known writer. Besides these, many Communists and Socialists who have been tried and convicted are sent here after expiration of their sentences. Others have been arrested by the Gestapo because of supposed or actual underground work, and sent here either without legal trial or in spite of acquittal.

Critics and Pessimists. Workmen, clerks, shopkeepers, or merchants who have shown dissatisfaction even in the mildest form with the Hitler regime.

Prisoners for Training. Jews and Aryans without any political past whose only offense consisted in going to a foreign country before or after Hitler came to power, or of coming back after the Saar settlement.

Followers of Jehovah and Bible Searchers. Members of deeply religious and fundamentally harmless sects who, because of their religious conviction that this is the age of the devil, are regarded as dangerous enemies of the state. Almost all of them are elderly men of the lower middle class, from remote sections of the country. Their faith is wonderful. When one day the commandant ended a long harangue with the words, "Whoever gives a written promise no longer to be a Bible searcher may expect an early release," only a few offered to sign. The rest remained faithful, although it meant that these feeble old men would be forced, even in the hottest weather, to push iron wheelbarrows loaded with sand from morning to night—and at a run.

Jews against whom no legal case could be made, and whom the Gestapo had therefore arrested on such charges as "sabotage of the German economy" or "violation of the rules concerning raw materials." There are also "race traitors," a special National Socialist invention. These are Jews who have had any kind of relations with "Aryans," no matter how honest. All such prisoners have to go about for a certain time sandwiched between placards reading, "I am a race traitor." The Jews are the worst-treated prisoners. All occupations in the workshops are forbidden them. "Jews front!" is the order when the hardest work is to be done. Copies of the *Stürmer* are distributed gratis among the S. S. men, and this seed of anti-Semitism yields a rich harvest. The graves in the cemetery prove it.

At five o'clock, during the winter toward six, comes the rising bell, followed by a hurried toilette, making of beds, and breakfast. After roll call the different work groups leave the camp. At nine there is a short interruption, at noon an interval of an hour and a half, and at six work is stopped. Then roll call again, dinner, free time, and night call at nine. The comrades who work in kitchen, bath, or workshop are envied. They are not only protected from the sun, rain, and snow but also from annoyance and "sport" during work. About 200 men work in the swamps from May to September, laying cables, digging canals, and cutting sod to be dried for fuel. Other groups carry the sod to the camp. One division—almost always Jews and Bible searchers—empties the latrines. Work is found for all the prisoners, even if it is only pushing about iron wheelbarrows full of sand.

From 100 to 150 men live in one barrack consisting of a large living-room, dormitory, and bathroom. Cupboards, long tables, and stools furnish the living-room; straw sacks on triple-deck iron bedsteads, the dormitory. By official order the standard of living of the prisoners must be below that of people on relief, and the food is correspondingly bad. Breakfast is an undetermined fluid called coffee, without milk or sugar. Lunch consists of a pot of rice, lentils, and beans, without meat or fat. For supper each prisoner receives a small portion of margarine and usually a liver sausage made in the camp—whose quality is such that it is not edible a day after it is made—and coffee. Each prisoner gets a pound of bread daily.

Every S. S. man is a superior. No back talk is allowed. Discipline begins as soon as one arrives at camp. A ring of S. S. men surrounds the newcomer. Verbal abuse, slaps, and kicks give him a quick grasp of his situation. Then comes his first taste of "sport." "Position! In step, march! A song! What, you don't want to sing, you swine! Everybody down! Up! March, march! Lie down, bend your knees"—twenty-five times, fifty times—"Roll!" Rolling is a special invention of the canaille of Esterwegen. Lying on the back, the arms crossed over the chest, one must rotate the body with incredible speed, to the left, to the right. "Quicker, why don't you roll quicker, you dogs? This is healthy, this is exercise, these are ways to strength and beauty." An S. S. man stands on your back, and another kicks sand into your mouth and says, "Go on, roll till you croak." So the torture proceeds. The heart beats as if it would break. The breath comes in gasps. But the sport goes on until night puts an end to it. A few minutes later you are lying on the straw sacks. A noisy clatter of heavy S. S. boots; a sharp whistle. "Everybody out of bed!" And the sport begins again. "Under the beds! On the beams! On your knees and elbows to the living-room! On the cupboards! Sing! Sing 'Von Himmel hoch da komm ich her.' " Three hours at Esterwegen change a man from a normal product of twentieth-century culture into the lowest of creatures, helplessly exposed to shame and brutality.

The guards leap like enraged dogs around the outgoing work groups. "Sing! Put on a new disc there!" You cannot march a single step without being forced to sing. It may be raining in torrents; it may be so hot that your tongue sticks to the roof of your mouth; the icy wind from the north may take your breath away. No matter; you must sing. "To work! March, march!" You work at full speed; not a second for rest or to straighten your back. "Hello, you over there, work faster or I'll be over." "You Jewish swine, come here! Run! What, you can't breathe? I'll help you." So it goes with individuals or with the whole group. For example, at roll call the count goes wrong. "Everybody down!" Twelve hundred men lie down in the dirt. Twelve hundred men roll. "Fall down forward!" Twelve hundred men with arms crossed behind their backs throw themselves forward in the mud.

The slightest infraction of the camp rules invokes a

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punishment worthy of the darkest ages. After the evening roll call a command, "Turn!" The prisoners form a hollow square. An officer stands in the middle and reads, "The prisoner [name] is to be punished by twenty-five strokes on his back." The victim stands in the middle of the court beside a massive hurdle to which he is tied by leather cords around his neck and knees. "Prisoners, position, eyes left!" Everybody has to watch the spectacle. "Volunteers, advance." Five S. S. men jump out of the row. Each gives the victim five hard strokes on back and neck with a whip. The camp physician, an S. S. leader, first gives his medical judgment about the probable effect of the punishment, and then watches the scene. The beating proceeds slowly. The tortured man is forced to count the strokes distinctly, in a loud voice. If he makes a mistake he receives more. After he is unbound he has to carry away the hurdle amid the mocking laughter of the guards.

The "Bunker" is the ill-famed prison of the camp. The slightest mistake means a sentence to sleep there, without a straw sack, covered only with a woolen blanket. This is not so bad, but pity him who is sentenced to "dark arrest" for weeks. These poor devils are bound with chains and left in the dark. They can neither sit nor lie. Their arms and feet become swollen and infected. Only every third day do they get the usual prison fare; the rest of the time they have only bread and water. And they are subjected to frightful tortures. The silence of the night is shattered by their cries. The prisoners, used to suffering and mistreatment, grow pale and tremble when they hear these unhuman screams.

The body gets used to the hardest labor. Nerves become calmer. Physical mistreatment loses its abnormal aspect and even its mental effect is deadened. You can thank the gods if you come out of a camp alive. There are a few people, however—Communists or Socialists accused of having attacked S. S. or S. A. men—who are designated to be shot "in flight." A Communist coming from a port in northern Germany arrived at the camp in the morning and was dead in the afternoon. The next morning his body was exhibited in the camp. A man alive and hopeful yesterday lies dead today on a pile of shavings, his uniform and beret caked with the blood that flowed from his wounds. The whole camp was forced to file past the rude coffin and look at the dead body.

Almost all the murdered men are buried in the swamps. The coffin containing the corpse of a Jewish "criminal" is placed on a truck. Jewish prisoners are loaded on with it, and forced to sit on the coffin, singing, "Muss' i' denn, muss i' denn, zum Städtele hinaus," as the car leaves the camp. A hole is quickly dug in the swamp; the coffin is tumbled into the grave upside down. In a great hurry the hole is filled up again. Several minutes of "sport" at the grave-side. Such is a funeral in the swamps.

How can anyone live for weeks, even for years, in this hell? The outside world ceases to exist. There is only one world—the camp. Outside you have had a wife, children, parents, friends. Here you have only comrades. Comradely help is given immediately to the newcomer. Consoling words, a little encouragement, practical advice concerning one's conduct make the first days easier. Social position, religion, education, opinions do not count. It is only you that count, and you are a comrade as long as you act like one. You belong to a group of 600 or 700 prisoners. There are, of course, great differences in character and temperament among them, but everyone has to subordinate himself to comradeship. Everyone is glad to do it. Everyone who is able to give aid does so. Each barrack has its representative of the director of the camp. He is the oldest in the room. His position is more difficult and exposed than that of the other prisoners. None of these intermediaries has ever committed an unfriendly act against a political prisoner, ever denounced a comrade, ever abused his power. Many of them have been sent to the "Bunker" rather than denounce their comrades. This suppressed, mistreated mass has the heroic strength to construct a world of its own in the midst of this hell. Comradeship is its basis. Mutual help, material and spiritual, is taken for granted, and so are self-control and sincerity.

Dubious Battle in California

BY JOHN STEINBECK

IN SIXTY years a complete revolution has taken place in California agriculture. Once its principal products were hay and cattle. Today fruits and vegetables are its most profitable crops. With the change in the nature of farming there has come a parallel change in the nature and amount of the labor necessary to carry it on. Truck gardens, while they give a heavy yield per acre, require much more labor and equipment than the raising of hay and livestock. At the same time these crops are seasonal, which means that they are largely handled by migratory workers. Along with the intensification of farming made necessary by truck gardening has come another important development. The number of large-scale farms, involving the investment of thousands of dollars, has increased; so has the number of very small farms of from five to ten acres. But the middle farm, of from 100 to 300 acres is in process of elimination.

There are in California, therefore, two distinct classes of farmers widely separated in standard of living, desires, needs, and sympathies: the very small farmer who more often than not takes the side of the workers in disputes, and the speculative farmer, like A. J. Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles *Times*, or like Herbert Hoover and William Randolph Hearst, absentee owners who possess

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huge sections of land. Allied with these large individual growers have been the big incorporated farms, owned by their stockholders and farmed by instructed managers, and a large number of bank farms, acquired by foreclosure and operated by superintendents whose labor policy is dictated by the bank. For example, the Bank of America is very nearly the largest farm owner and operator in the state of California.

These two classes have little or no common ground; while the small farmer is likely to belong to the grange, the speculative farmer belongs to some such organization as the Associated Farmers of California, which is closely tied to the state Chamber of Commerce. This group has as its major activity resistance to any attempt of farm labor to organize. Its avowed purpose has been the distribution of news reports and leaflets tending to show that every attempt to organize agricultural workers was the work of red agitators and that every organization was Communist inspired.

The completion of the transcontinental railroads left in the country many thousands of Chinese and some Hindus who had been imported for the work. At about the same time the increase of fruit crops, with their heavy seasonal need for pickers, created a demand for this mass of cheap labor. These people, however, did not long remain on the land. They migrated to the cities, rented small plots of land there, and, worst of all, organized in the so-called "tongs," which were able to direct their efforts as a group. Soon the whites were inflamed to race hatred, riots broke out against the Chinese, and repressive activities were undertaken all over the state, until these people, who had been a tractable and cheap source of labor, were driven from the fields.

To take the place of the Chinese, the Japanese were encouraged to come into California; and they, even more than the Chinese, showed an ability not only to obtain land for their subsistence but to organize. The "Yellow Peril" agitation was the result. Then, soon after the turn of the century Mexicans were imported in great numbers. For a while they were industrious workers, until the process of importing twice as many as were needed in order to depress wages made their earnings drop below any conceivable living standard. In such conditions they did what the others had done; they began to organize. The large growers immediately opened fire on them. The newspapers were full of the radicalism of the Mexican unions. Riots became common in the Imperial Valley and in the grape country in and adjacent to Kern County. Another wave of importations was arranged, from the Philippine Islands, and the cycle was repeated—wage depression due to abundant labor, organization, and the inevitable race hatred and riots.

This brings us almost to the present. The drought in the Middle West has very recently made available an enormous amount of cheap labor. Workers have been coming to California in nondescript cars from Oklahoma, Nebraska, Texas, and other states, parts of which have been rendered uninhabitable by drought. Poverty-stricken after the destruction of their farms, their last reserves used up in making the trip, they have arrived so beaten and destitute that they have been willing at first to work under any conditions and for any wages offered. This migration started on a considerable scale about two years ago and is increasing all the time.

For a time it looked as though the present cycle would be identical with the earlier ones, but there are several factors in this influx which differentiate it from the others. In the first place, the migrants are undeniably American and not deportable. In the second place, they were not lured to California by a promise of good wages, but are refugees as surely as though they had fled from destruction by an invader. In the third place, they are not drawn from a peon class, but have either owned small farms or been farm hands in the early American sense, in which the "hand" is a member of the employing family. They have one fixed idea, and that is to acquire land and settle on it. Probably the most important difference is that they are not easily intimidated. They are courageous, intelligent, and resourceful. Having gone through the horrors of the drought and with immense effort having escaped from it, they cannot be herded, attacked, starved, or frightened as all the others were.

Let us see what the emigrants from the dust bowl find when they arrive in California. The ranks of permanent and settled labor are filled. In most cases all resources have been spent in making the trip from the dust bowl. Unlike the Chinese and the Filipinos, the men rarely come alone. They bring wives and children, now and then a few chickens and their pitiful household goods, though in most cases these have been sold to buy gasoline for the trip. It is quite usual for a man, his wife, and from three to eight children to arrive in California with no possessions but the rattletrap car they travel in and the ragged clothes on their bodies. They often lack bedding and cooking utensils.

During the spring, summer, and part of the fall the man may find some kind of agricultural work. The top pay for a successful year will not be over $400, and if he has any trouble or is not agile, strong, and quick it may well be only $150. It will be seen that rent is out of the question. Clothes cannot be bought. Every available cent must go for food and a reserve to move the car from harvest to harvest. The migrant will stop in one of two federal camps, in a state camp, in houses put up by the large or small farmers, or in the notorious squatters' camps. In the state and federal camps he will find sanitary arrangements and a place to pitch his tent. The camps maintained by the large farmers are of two classes—houses which are rented to the workers at what are called nominal prices, $4 to $8 a month, and camp grounds which are little if any better than the squatters' camps. Since rent is such a problem, let us see how the houses are fitted. Ordinarily there is one room, no running water; one toilet and one bathroom are provided for two or three hundred persons. Indeed, one large farmer was accused in a Growers' Association meeting of being "kind of communistic" because he advocated separate toilets for men and women. Some of the large ranches maintain what are called model work-

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ers' houses. One such ranch, run by a very prominent man, has neat single-room houses built of whitewashed adobe. They are said to have cost $500 apiece. They are rented for $5 a month. This ranch pays twenty cents an hour as opposed to the thirty cents paid at other ranches and indorsed by the grange in the community. Since this rugged individual is saving 33⅓ per cent of his labor cost and still charging $5 a month rent for his houses, it will be readily seen that he is getting a very fair return on his money besides being generally praised as a philanthropist. The reputation of this ranch, however, is that the migrants stay only long enough to get money to buy gasoline with, and then move on.

The small farmers are not able to maintain camps of any comfort or with any sanitary facilities except one or two holes dug for toilets. The final resource is the squatters' camp, usually located on the bank of some watercourse. The people pack into them. They use the watercourse for drinking, bathing, washing their clothes, and to receive their refuse, with the result that epidemics start easily and are difficult to check. Stanislaus County, for example, has a nice culture of hookworm in the mud by its squatters' camp. The people in these camps, because of long-continued privation, are in no shape to fight illness. It is often said that no one starves in the United States, yet in Santa Clara County last year five babies were certified by the local coroner to have died of "malnutrition," the modern word for starvation, and the less shocking word, although in its connotation it is perhaps more horrible since it indicates that the suffering has been long drawn out.

In these squatters' camps the migrant will find squalor beyond anything he has yet had to experience and intimidation almost unchecked. At one camp it is the custom of deputy sheriffs, who are also employees of a great ranch nearby, to drive by the camp for hours at a time, staring into the tents as though trying to memorize faces. The communities in which these camps exist want migratory workers to come for the month required to pick the harvest, and to move on when it is over. If they do not move on, they are urged to with guns.

These are some of the conditions California offers the refugees from the dust bowl. But the refugees are even less content with the starvation wages and the rural slums than were the Chinese, the Filipinos, and the Mexicans. Having their families with them, they are not so mobile as the earlier immigrants were. If starvation sets in, the whole family starves, instead of just one man. Therefore they have been quick to see that they must organize for their own safety.

Attempts to organize have been met with a savagery from the large growers beyond anything yet attempted. In Kern County a short time ago a group met to organize under the A. F. of L. They made out their form and petition for a charter and put it in the mail for Washington. That night a representative of Associated Farmers wired Washington for information concerning a charter granted to these workers. The Washington office naturally replied that it had no knowledge of such a charter. In the Bakersfield papers the next day appeared a story that the A. F. of L. denied the affiliation; consequently the proposed union must be of Communist origin.

But the use of the term communism as a bugbear has nearly lost its sting. An official of a speculative-farmer group, when asked what he meant by a Communist, replied: "Why, he's the guy that wants twenty-five cents an hour when we're paying twenty." This realistic and cynical definition has finally been understood by the workers, so that the term is no longer the frightening thing it was. And when a county judge said, "California agriculture demands that we create and maintain a peonage," the future of unorganized agricultural labor was made clear to every man in the field.

The usual repressive measures have been used against these migrants: shooting by deputy sheriffs in "self-defense," jailing without charge, refusal of trial by jury, torture and beating by night riders. But even in the short time that these American migrants have been out here there has been a change. It is understood that they are being attacked not because they want higher wages, not because they are Communists, but simply because they want to organize. And to the men, since this defines the thing not to be allowed, it also defines the thing that is completely necessary to the safety of the workers.

This season has seen the beginning of a new form of intimidation not used before. It is the whispering campaign which proved so successful among business rivals. As in business, it is particularly deadly here because its source cannot be traced and because it is easily spread. One of the items of this campaign is the rumor that in the event of labor troubles the deputy sheriffs inducted to break up picket lines will be armed not with tear gas but with poison gas. The second is aimed at the women and marks a new low in tactics. It is to the effect that in the event of labor troubles the water supply used by strikers will be infected with typhoid germs. The fact that these bits of information are current over a good part of the state indicates that they have been widely planted.

The effect has been far from that desired. There is now in California anger instead of fear. The stupidity of the large grower has changed terror into defensive fury. The granges, working close to the soil and to the men, and knowing the temper of the men of this new race, have tried to put through wages that will allow a living, however small. But the large growers, who have been shown to be the only group making a considerable profit from agriculture, are devoting their money to tear gas and rifle ammunition. The men will organize and the large growers will meet organization with force. It is easy to prophesy this. In Kern County the grange has voted $1 a hundred pounds for cotton pickers for the first picking. The Associated Farmers have not yielded from seventy-five cents. There is tension in the valley, and fear for the future.

It is fervently to be hoped that the great group of migrant workers so necessary to the harvesting of California's crops may be given the right to live decently, that they may not be so badgered, tormented, and hurt that in the end they become avengers of the hundreds of thousands who have been tortured and starved before them.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

I SUPPOSE it is too much to hope that President Roosevelt may appoint Ross A. Collins of Mississippi, the former Congressman, to the post left vacant by the death of Secretary Dern of the War Department. Yet it would be an almost ideal selection. There has never been a more useful member of the House Military Affairs Committee than was Mr. Collins, who unfortunately resigned his seat in the hope that he might be elected Senator from his state—he was defeated by his demagogue opponent, Theodore G. Bilbo. Mr. Collins had served in the House from 1921 to 1935 and during most of this time was on the Military Affairs Committee. He took his work most seriously and studied the organization of the army, its personnel, its needs, and its methods of business with a thoroughness that nobody else had thought of giving to it. I believe it is true that he was the only member whom the War Department officials feared when they came before the committee, for Mr. Collins sometimes told them things about the army they did not know themselves. More than that, Mr. Collins is not a militarist. If he were Secretary of War, he would not go round the country making bombastic and imperialistic speeches, and he certainly would not permit the present Assistant Secretary, Mr. Woodring, to preach militarism and to attack violently the most outstanding clergymen in the country and the workers for peace in general merely because they stand for peace. It is just because Mr. Collins is such a civilized man and because he would insist on reorganizing the army and making it really efficient that it is too much to hope for his appointment.

Perhaps next winter, when Major General Johnson Hagood's new book on the army appears, this whole question of army organization and army efficiency may get a real ventilation in Congress. I say "may" and not "will" for the reason that two years ago a book on the United States navy appeared which would have caused the fall of any ministry in Europe if it had been written about the navy of a European country. It was called "Is the Navy Ready?" and it came from the pen of F. Russell Bichowsky, a former instructor in the Naval Academy and civilian official who was for some years employed in one of the navy's scientific bureaus. It was not that he had only his own opinions to offer which made it possible for the navy to ignore this terrible indictment of itself, its educational methods, and its efficiency as a fighting machine, for the author had gone through the back files for a number of years of the leading naval professional publication, the *Proceedings of the Naval Institute*, and taken out criticisms of the service from the pens of officers of high standing. This book of Bichowsky's was reinforced after its publication by Admiral Sims's indictment of our system of training naval officers, in which he declared that we were not producing any officers competent to handle the fleet in war time. This alone would have caused a governmental crisis elsewhere, and either the admiral making the charge would have been court-martialed and dismissed or reforms would have taken place.

Similarly in the army the criticisms of Major Generals Johnson Hagood, William C. Rivers, and Smedley D. Butler, the latter of the marines, go unnoticed. Just as the navy ignores aspersions upon its honor and efficiency, so the War Department simply ducks the criticisms of the few officers who have the courage and are in a position to say what they believe. Perhaps Major General Hagood's book will sting both Congress and the War Department into action, but the only definite assurance of this that I can think of would be the appointment of Ross Collins as Secretary of War.

The recent action of France in placing the army and navy under one head ought to make Congress consider creating a similar department of defense with one executive and three assistant secretaries to head the army, the navy, and the flying force. Was there ever anything more preposterous than the fact that the War and Navy departments are within sight of each other in Washington and yet have no more to do with each other in the matter of the nation's defense than they have with the Department of Commerce, or of Labor? Part of the air forces are assigned to the navy and marine corps and part to the army, yet Holland, France, Germany, and Italy are consolidating their army and navy air forces. Great Britain has long had only one air force. Opposition to the combining of our defense organizations under one head is based solely on the fact that it has never been done before and on the fear of the present departments that they will lose prestige and power. Yet if war should come, there would not be time to work out a coordinated plan for defense such as should be in existence today. There might be directly conflicting orders to the navy fliers and the army air men which would result in confusion and chaos, perhaps even collisions, not with the enemy, but with each other. The worst of it is that the money spent on preparedness is just fooling the public into believing that the arming of the country is going on in accordance with a detailed plan worked out in relation to a definite foreign policy of this government.

I sincerely hope that Major General Hagood will devote a good portion of his book to the astounding fact that our responsible political leaders speak of a defense policy without any genuine attempt to define such a policy, without understanding what such a policy calls for, and without seeing that unison of the armed services is the very basis of any defense policy which merits the name.

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BROUN'S PAGE

PROFESSIONAL baseball is one of America's industries which have profited particularly by recovery. Although the magnates have not made any public expression they are decidedly in debt to the New Deal. Moreover, in their own system of government for the game they long ago abandoned earlier ideas of complete autonomy and set up a strongly centralized control under Judge Landis. But it would hardly be fair to call this fascism since Landis has to get himself elected every once and so often.

Still, at the moment I am not going to concern myself with the economic or political aspects of the national game, rich as these fields may be. My own reviving enthusiasm in the pennant races rests, I hope, upon the restoration of pitching to its proper place as an art form. Babe Ruth was a genius, and his own exploits in self-expression on the diamond will never be forgotten, but he did destroy all balance and form in the proper pattern of big-league baseball. Or at any rate one phase of the art was developed at the expense of the rest.

The Babe was the prophet of man's potentialities. He was the "yea" sayer of the diamond. Carl Hubbell is a sort of Housman marking in mournful numbers—chiefly zeros—the limitations upon human aspirations. In the days of Ruth it seemed a small world after all, and the fences were close and not particularly compelling. During the reign of Hubbell first base itself is a Marathon route.

All of which is just another way of saying that the pitchers are beginning to catch up with the hitters once again. If I choose to mention Dizzy Dean only in passing, it will be because in my opinion Carl Hubbell is the greatest technician the game has ever known, and I am not even excepting Mathewson. It is true that both Ed Walsh and Chesbro ran up strings of victories greater than those which Hubbell has achieved, but there was a certain brute strength in their triumphs. Hubbell prevails on sheer skill. He is a pitchers' pitcher and certainly the sort of ballplayer who would have delighted the heart of Ruskin or of Pater.

One of the most thrilling things which an admirer of perfectionism can do is to sit behind the plate and watch Hubbell work on one of his good days. And most of his days are good. One of the curious contradictions in his mastery of his medium is that he happens to be a southpaw. There may have been left-handed architects, authors, and painters who possessed control, but it is notorious that left-handed pitchers are universally a little whacky.

Some have made up for their aberrations by intermittent flashes of brilliant execution. The late Rube Waddell, for instance, was not an artist in the sense in which Carl Hubbell is, but he could upon occasion pitch practically unhittable baseball. It all gets back to the fundamental question of whether Willa Cather is more important than Theodore Dreiser. Dreiser can't write. He is distinctly what the big-league pitchers call a "thrower," but when the perspiration is on him he often can manage to buzz the ball across even though it is straight as a string.

Hubbell, unlike Theodore Dreiser or Walter Johnson, plays for the corners. He gains his effects with a minimum of effort and by his precision rather than his power. Of course he has a good curve and he is a master of the screwball. Indeed, he is one of the few left-handers who has ever succeeded in perfecting this delivery.

When Carl Hubbell is right he is always ahead of the batter. I watched him once in a tight game in Boston when he did not throw more than three balls during the entire game which did not go precisely where he intended to place them. Naturally he was not throwing a succession of strikes although he almost always had the first on the batter before he undertook to make him go after bad ones. Too many pitchers with a two-and-none advantage will waste the next one so grossly that the current hitter cannot possibly be deceived into swinging. They will give the batter a ball two feet over his head or one which hits the dirt in the vain hope that he may go after it. But when Hubbell wastes a ball he uses more finesse. He doesn't waste it by much. He simply puts it in a mean spot, for he knows not only the corners of the plate but the territory just outside where a sharp-eyed batter or even an umpire may make a mistake.

Once in the annual all-star game Carl Hubbell struck out six (or was it five?) of the finest batters in the world in succession. But that was bravura stuff and unworthy of him. It was like Wagner (Richard) throwing a song hit into the middle of the "Ring" or Shakespeare stooping to write a "Taming of the Shrew."

I trust that we can agree that the chief function of a pitcher is not to give the batter something he can't hit but rather to serve the ball up to him in such fashion that he cannot hit it in the manner to which he had been accustomed. It is, of course, amusing to get a man to miss a wide curve by a foot, but there is more artistry in letting him get just a piece of a delivery properly placed for his undoing.

To be sure, Hubbell is tragically born either too soon or too late. He came to the game well after the fans had begun to forget all about the art of pitching or take any interest in it. They are beginning to show a greater appreciation for this old art form, but it is still too tepid. In the days of his glory excursion trains were run to bring the villagers into town to see Babe Ruth knock the ball over the fence. Even today it is considered expedient to let it be known in advance when Dizzy Dean is going to take the mound for the Cardinals. But my great admiration still goes out to Carl Hubbell, the quiet and inconspicuous left-hander in the pea-green business suit, who moves through the world with all the self-effacement of an Alfred Landon.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Gerontion in Cork

BIRD ALONE. By Sean O'Faolain. The Viking Press. $2.50.

THE principal reflection left by Mr. O'Faolain's third volume of fiction is that here is a young novelist who has mastered all the more important elements of his craft—to a greater extent perhaps than any of his contemporaries in either England or America—only to remain handicapped by a fundamental uncertainty or confusion as to his theme. This new work possesses all the qualities that made the short stories of "Midsummer Night Madness" and "A Nest of Simple Folk" among the few real consolations of recent book seasons. It is distinguished by the same controlled use of Anglo-Irish speech rhythms, the same brilliance of both narrative and descriptive detail, and the same rich handling of the mise-en-scène. But it is hard to discover in it anything that can be said to mark an advance over either of those earlier books. It is not that Mr. O'Faolain, turning from direct treatment of revolutionary materials, has failed to bring up to date the long chronicle of Irish social and political history begun in his first novel. For it would seem not impossible for a writer of his imagination to give us a novel of Irish life of such depth and breadth that the revolutionary subject would fall into his proper relation to the whole. It is rather that he has chosen to demonstrate the acknowledged perfection of his craft within the easy limitations of a minor and now rather too conventionalized pattern.

Taken conventionally, and it has already been so taken by the English reviewers, "Bird Alone" belongs to the class of romantic death idyl which has enjoyed such a lively vogue since the war. Future historians will doubtless discover some connection between this fondness for identifying the themes of love and death, as revealed in novelists as disparate as Michael Arlen and Ernest Hemingway, and the present state of our society. At the moment it is certain only that, in addition to providing an incontrovertible termination to a story, the necessity of death for the heroine renders almost unavoidable some very facile dramatic writing. This is a consequence doubled in certainty when death is allied with the other officially most effective of literary subjects; and like "A Farewell to Arms" Mr. O'Faolain's novel reaches its climax in a scene describing a childbirth. The truth is, however, that this central situation is so interwoven in the rich background of people and places that its melodramatic angles are considerably softened. Much more likely to remain in the memory than the over-ritualized love scenes are such figures as the narrator's unregenerate grandfather, his notorious Aunt Virginia from London, Mabel-in-the-Stable, and the evil-eyed Condoorum. Mr. O'Faolain's characters are on a somewhat higher social level than those in Frank O'Connor's stories and novel of Cork but they have no less capacity for rhetoric and absurdity. Perhaps the high point in all this humorous accompaniment to the main story is the epochal last confession of Grandfather Crone, in which the old man still keeps "an even balance between his loyalties, so that what with his *fortissimo* secularities and the *pianissimo* confession the thing was like an antiphon between this world and the next." But it is not possible by any single character or incident to indicate the remarkable quality of density with which Mr. O'Faolain endows his presentation of the complex little world of Cork. The city itself, as has been said of the Dublin of Joyce's "Ulysses," is more real and interesting than any of its inhabitants. This is managed partly through the fluid poetic style and partly through a formal framework which makes possible the rapid transitions and vivid condensations of the memory.

The framework, which is distinctly reminiscent of Mr. Eliot's "Gerontion," is that of recollection: an old man looking through misty windows upon the city in which he has lived all the important experiences of his life. The symbolical division of the three periods of his life—The Dark Cave, The Jungle, The Desert—increases the resemblance to a lyrical monologue. To this choice of novel structure, despite its great advantages for Mr. O'Faolain's type of prose, there are at least two objections amply illustrated in the book. The first is that the novelist is practically forced to make his narrator employ language and rhythms more complicated than are plausible for his particular background. It is hard to believe, for example, that even a carpenter who knows his Shakespeare and Moore would describe his native city in this fashion: "Lovely under the faint webbing of the hearth-vapors of every house, linked from peak to peak into a communal smoke, covering her like a city-under-the-sea." The second and more serious objection is that rather tenuous poetic renderings and reflections are substituted for the orderly working out of a theme that we have come, rightly or wrongly, to expect from the novel form. It is never precisely clear what pattern of meaning we are to extract from the sequence of circumstances that have made Corny Crone a "bird alone" in his social environment. There is mention of a "whisper of wind" that seems to tell him that he has had too little sense of the claims of common humanity. But we know that the tragedy itself—the death of his fiancée on the lonely marshes and his consequent ostracism—has been as much the result of outside forces like ignorance and intolerance. The whisper of wind does not quite condense into a theme. It is as if Mr. O'Faolain himself, like Grandfather Crone, were trying too hard to keep a balance between his social and religious loyalties. Here again we are left, as at the close of his first novel, with an impression of conflicts unresolved, of ambiguities remaining suspended in a flowing current of exquisitely modulated language.

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GOMEZ: TYRANT OF THE ANDES. By Thomas Rourke. William Morrow and Company. $3.50.

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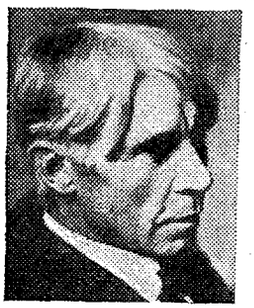

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all over the world were hounded, blackmailed, or murdered, and their well-nigh unbelievable stories stifled. At the same time through lavish subsidies for favorable publicity, the tales of the rotting torture holes, ruled over by known sadistic criminals, were concealed by sickening praise of Gómez and his regime in all the notable publications of the world, not excluding the New York *Times*.

But did not the great benevolent patriot eliminate all foreign debt? Did he not build fine roads? Well-paid publicists failed to mention that most of these roads were not built to benefit the nation but to accommodate the vast private estates of the dictator, and that their cost in money and human misery hit an all-time high. But did he not maintain peace in one of those troublesome countries, thus permitting honest American capital to operate?

Now, after twenty-seven years of regal pomp and might, the dictator has discovered that he also fits in something less than a six-foot coffin. Fourteen tons of the cruelest leg irons yet devised by man have been flung into the sea at Puerto Cabello. Venezuela breathes again. What next?

Rourke gives us little inkling, but he does tell the whole story of Gómez, succinctly and dramatically, without special pleading. A former oil engineer, the author of "Thunder Below," an intimate novel of Latin American life, Rourke—with his broad background of Venezuelan history, his first-hand knowledge of the people, their life and customs and institutions—in vivid, swift, and occasionally brilliant style contributes a worthy addition to the best literature dealing with the southern countries. He knows Venezuela better than most men ever get to know a foreign country, and this knowledge flows into his exciting narrative to give it validity, strength, and richness. The career of the sardonic ruler, his cattle rustling, his campaigns, his mistresses, his lust for gold and power, his cruelties, his fantastic energies and abilities—all are told.

It is too soon for a definitive biography. Confessions, hidden records, all sorts of data are still pouring into the pages of the liberated Caracas newspapers. During the long conspiracy of silence, which partly baffles even Rourke, the dictator had powerful allies—for hundreds of millions of dollars of American and British capital are invested in the country, until recently the second-largest petroleum producer in the world. There were dark and sinuous things in the dealings of many of the oil companies and other great investors, completely whitewashed by Rourke—shady concessions, bribed officials, false-bottom tankers, tricky gauges, connivances with corrupt officialdom to defraud the nation. A few of these things are on record, but Rourke does not give the story.

Now that there is talk of nationalizing Venezuelan oil, the country may well become a second Mexico, with thunderous notes speeding toward Caracas, and battleships with stripped decks and guns trained on Maracaibo. As in Mexico, some of the oil companies even before the death of Gómez had worked out emergency plans in detail to set up an independent oil republic. If and when these momentous events disturb the Rooseveltian dream of noble pan-Americanism, Rourke's book will provide us with no background for understanding them.

Personally I regret that he did not delve into the records of the relations of our State Department with the dictator. He might well have quoted some of the gushing eulogies by our outstanding diplomats and Congressmen at the Bolivar centenary, at a time when behind the scenes, perhaps to hide any signs of unrest from his silk-hat visitors, Gómez had embarked upon one of his most terroristic ram-

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pages: students were toiling in chains on the roads and live men were hanging with meat-hooks through their jaws in the public plazas.

I also wish that Rourke gave a deeper explanation— he gives it by implication—than that of mere political precedent for dictatorships in countries of such racial and economic cleavage as Venezuela. But he is so generous with information and understanding and has stuck so well to his essential task of narrative biography that quibbling is not in order. His book is exciting enough to warrant its being read by a public usually lethargic about the affairs of our southern neighbors.

CARLETON BEALS

The Jews of Lodz

THE BROTHERS ASHKENAZI. By I. J. Singer. Translated from the Yiddish by Maurice Samuel. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

THE mood of this novel is of a piece with the mood of our time. Now that the Jewish problem is more than ever with us and the fate of the Jew swings in the scale of political events, a narrative depicting a wide panorama of Jewish life through a fusion of its national and social elements is something of a triumph of historic consciousness over the inertia of tradition. Not that Yiddish writers have not done it before, and, in the case of radicals like David Bergelson, with greater clarity and concentration. Yet the fact remains that most Yiddish writers have been content to immerse themselves in genre painting, provincial nostalgia, and the segregated patterns of a dying folk life. This seems to be the reason for the scarcity of translations from that language. Lacking a common denominator with scenes and values of literature in other languages, much Yiddish writing has inevitably found itself chained to the Wailing Wall. In a way Singer has himself been one of the romantics of national introversion. With this novel, however, he has thrust forward into the mêlée of modern experience, and this without surrendering a jot of his fidelity to the particulars of the classic Jewish world of Eastern Europe.

The story of Lodz, textile center of Poland, supplies the background of Mr. Singer's novel. Each character's destiny is, to a large degree, determined by the fortunes of the city itself—from its small beginnings in primitive accumulation on through the Industrial Revolution and the growth of monopoly. The brothers Max and Yakob Ashkenazi, sons of a pietist father, move through careers that involve a full recreation of their teeming environment—the all-absorbing business deals, the cycles of intimate life, the breakdown of orthodox *mores,* the rise of the labor movement with its strikes and revolutionary conspiracies, the World War, the Russian Revolution, and the birth of an independent Poland. Events are shaped by the combat of classes, individualized within the human void of wealth and in the agonies and struggles of the poor. The variegated national traditions of the city find their detailed representation in symbolic figures, such as Nissan, the workers' leader, who reenacts in revolutionary terms his father's messianic yearnings and ascetic frenzy; Huntze, the German textile magnate, who defends his peasant heritage in battling the social ambitions of his degenerate sons and daughters; and Flederbaum, the Jewish millionaire, who, having abandoned his religion in all but name, remembers in the nights the implacable God of his fathers and in fear and trembling pours his money into the synagogues and charities of the Jews to appease the jealous deity.

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But of course it is Max and Yakob who carry the brunt of the story's movement. Max, a physical weakling and a brilliant Talmudic scholar in his youth, rises to wealth and power through countless cruelties and betrayals, while Yakob, a tranquil, self-indulgent type, alert to the enchantments of sheer living, makes his way through luck with women. The rivalry between the brothers, running its course through boundless hatred to reconciliation on the brink of financial disaster and death, is cast, it seems to me, in the Bibical mold of Cain and Abel. Nowhere is the deeply Hebraic nature of the author's imagination so patent as in the character of Max, in whom we discern the quality of evil absolutized as in some of the figures of the Old Testament. And as Max dies repentant, cursing, like Job, the day he was born—"his head fallen across the rumpled pages of his Bible"—his end serves to revitalize his origin in the mythology of his people.

The book ends on a note of interrogation, for though the author has welded the national and social elements of his subject, he has not resolved the problem of their interaction. As the story closes, the reader may be left with the impression that the classes are taking one road and the Jews another. Nissan's disappointment in the October uprising, the shattering of Feldblum's faith in a Poland free from tyranny and racial hatred, the ineffectualness of the money solution for the Jewish dilemma, as exemplified in the death of the brothers—are these the fears of the author or his answer?

It might also be said that frequently the haste of history stays the intensity of the writing. In its effect on specific emotions and perceptions, the author's rendering of the objective flow of events is at times more illustrative than profound. The orchestration is perhaps a trifle too geometric, the characters too devoted to the destinies mapped out for them. The world of this social novelist suffers from an excess of rationalism. Given the intensity of pauses and the relief of a more plastic humanity, this novel could have reached a higher imaginative level. But even as it is, "The Brothers Ashkenazi" seems to me the most important novel of Jewish life so far published in English.

PHILIP RAHV

Small Pink Bloom

SPLENDOR IN THE GRASS. By Audrey Wurdemann. Harper and Brothers. $2.

MISS WURDEMANN is so gracefully depreciatory of her talents in certain of the poems here that one is tempted to take her at her own estimate. The opening lyric, for example, draws a useful comparison between the activities of the locust and the labors of the poet, both of whom, it appears, are concerned with the portage of "a single grain" "to a paltry storehouse." Farther on, in a sonnet descriptive of the resurgence of the arbutus, "a natural growth, a thing of the very soil," Miss Wurdemann pauses somewhat wistfully to register the hope that her own "twisted thoughts" may some day "put forth a small pink bloom." Elsewhere she proceeds to define the full life as one devoted wholly to seeing "With the eye Of the fly," tasting with the "tongue of the bee," hearing with "the furred ear Of the deer," smelling "As a dog can tell Trouble and terror," and touching "With the pink splayed hands of the mole." It would be excessive to suggest that Miss Wurdemann has not been to some extent successful in achieving each of these modest objectives; she has, in the present volume, carried a single grain, put forth a small pink bloom, and reported the "splendors in the grass"—which are hardly those Wordsworth meant—through

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what may be politely fancied as the eye, tongue, ear, nose, and hand of a fly, bee, deer, dog, and mole respectively.

More than this, there is little to be said, except that the volume embarrasses definition by its complete colorlessness. Miss Wurdemann writes trippingly, without intensity or distinction. She is content to speculate as to the shape, sound, and consistency of cold, to note the flight of pigeons and geese, the figures in a tapestry, the details of unicorns, new moons, spiderwebs, and her face in the mirror, and to devise literary nosegays out of traditional flowers. It is a little beside the point to cite incidental echoes of Millay, Dickinson, and Léonie Adams which occur in several of the lyrics here, for Miss Wurdemann's models, like her observation of natural phenomena, have yielded her only their platitudes.

BEN BELITT

Revolt of the White Collars

A TIME TO REMEMBER. By Leane Zugsmith. Random House. $2.

THIS is not only the best novel that Miss Zugsmith has written, but one of the best social-minded novels that anybody has written, and one of the sanest approaches to the broadly anonymous—but no longer wholly inarticulate—population of our time. Of the fiction of the left, this is an exemplary novel to set before an open-minded reader because, starting from scratch, he would have no choice but to end up in a partisan mood. To some extent this would be due to the effect of the book on his emotions—with its human characters, its pathos, its touches of personal drama and social passion, "A Time to Remember" has a decided emotional appeal—but it would be chiefly due to the effect of the book on his mind. Miss Zugsmith, nowhere seeking to intoxicate the reader with belligerent indictments, has simply shown that the modern business world, even minus its most flagrant abuses, makes life hopeless for one's self-respect, one's human growth, one's sense of being fully alive: she makes us see it as a chain we drag around with us, if it isn't a heavy boot that bashes in our heads. Her novel, in other words, goes beyond showing that the methods of present-day capitalism are incompatible with human dignity; it shows that their very goal is incompatible with human freedom (the freedom of the bosses hardly less than the freedom of the workers).

"A Time to Remember" deals with white-collar employees in a department store. We become familiar with them as so many human beings before we observe them banded together as fellow-workers and, more significantly later on, as fellow-strikers. They are not much alike, mentally or temperamentally, in background, education, or social consciousness; most of them, however, are typical American products swallowing the myths of democracy and opportunity as a gesture against fate. For the most part they are not imaginative or self-assertive by nature; some of them are possibly grateful to have so few responsibilities, even toward themselves. But they are subtly worn down or dried up by the simple facts of their situation—the long hours of work under unpleasant circumstances for inadequate pay. And with the clash that arises through the formation of a union, when they are spied upon, blackmailed into giving information, bounced for becoming members, a capacity for leadership and action begins to assert itself.

Miss Zugsmith neither glorifies her strike nor distorts its meaning. For both bosses and workers it is a time of enlightenment and a time of confusion, and people on both sides, granted their bias, behave like human beings. Nor, though the

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strikers win, is their victory more than, to quote the author's own words, an "armed truce." Indeed, the clearest perception which the book brings home to you is that nothing is really settled by the here and now of her story, since it reflects but a moment in a struggle that is basic and irreconcilable. The system has got beyond repair; the people, taken individually, have ceased to count.

That is the final verdict, the verdict of our minds; but it is the business of fiction to attack our minds by way of our emotions, and to make people, taken individually in a different way, count for all they are worth. Miss Zugsmith, aware of this, has never allowed the immediate realities of her novel to be swallowed up by its implications. Here are people involved in a process; but here, to begin with, are people. People, many of them, quite ignorant of the process, and only beginning to learn as the process jumps a cog. People with families, with love affairs, with modest, absurd, unruly desires, with all kinds of prejudices, all degrees of courage. Even those who are prepared to fight and know what they are fighting for, work with conflicting emotions: one of them has a sick, pathetic, uncomprehending father; another has a jealous, pathetic, uncomprehending wife.

Thus through the material itself, through telling a vigorous story about interesting men and women, Miss Zugsmith leads us step by step to an understanding of their place in society; and then leads us one step farther, to understand the structure of that society, where the pay envelopes and the blocks of stock, the bouncings and the promotions, are all equally enslaving. "A Time to Remember" is impressive both for what it has to say and for the way it says it.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

The Bunga-Bunga Tree

ANTI-SEMITISM HISTORICALLY AND CRITICALLY EXAMINED. By Hugo Valentin. The Viking Press. $3.

"WHEN the bunga-bunga tree yields abundantly, the Australian blacks allow the stranger to share its fruit; when the yield is moderate, they may not do so; and in time of famine they eat the stranger." In this behavior Professor Hugo Valentin finds the prototype and explanation of modern anti-Semitism; for, as he adds, and many observers will agree with him, "civilized man is the twin brother of primitive man."

Civilized men, however, do not eat the stranger raw. They insist on seasoning him with spicy vices and cooking him over elaborate and complicated grills of theology, nationalism, or racialism; and by the time they have wiped their mouths it would appear that they have not devoured an innocent stranger but baffled a dangerous enemy. For men who want to know the whys and hows of anti-Semitism, as well as men who honestly regard the Jews askance, we urge the bestowal of two or three hours on Hugo Valentin's candid work, "Anti-Semitism Historically and Critically Examined."

The author is a Swede, a Christian, and a distinguished historian at the University of Upsala. The Jews of Sweden, it should be noted, number about 7,000, or one-tenth of 1 per cent of the total population—a mere fleck proportionately one-tenth the former size of German Jewry, which itself was proportionately a quarter the size of American Jewry. As a consequence, this Nordic student of the Jewish question—he has given years of study and devotion to it—can look with superb and certainly impartial peninsular isolation upon the madness which has overrun Central Europe and threatens the two Americas. His isolation from psychic contagion of either a philo- or anti-Semitic nature, his even temper, such as one expects but does not always find in a historian, and his wide and competent familiarity with the subject are a guaranty and a clear gain for the reader. Indeed, as a result of this book Professor Valentin will doubtless be ranked with G. F. Abbott and Leroy-Beaulieu as a dispassionate interpreter of Israel to the Gentiles.

The 300-page volume opens with a few brief chapters devoted to anti-Semitism in ancient and medieval times—a survey, it must be confessed, that smacks too literally of the encyclopedias and standard histories from which it was drawn. But the succeeding hundred pages, devoted particularly to Germany as the country which gave birth and classic expression to modern anti-Semitism, will reward the inquirer with a succinct, accurate, and highly readable account of why and how Germany and many of its neighboring lands, when the bunga-bunga tree went back on them, took to eating their Jews. The concluding and larger portion of the book details the leading charges brought against these victims—charges especially prevalent in Germany, echoes of which are not unfamiliar in America—such as racial inferiority, a conspiracy to rule the world, overweening financial power, secret Talmudic doctrines, radicalism, bolshevism, and parasitic habits. Each charge is examined in the light of its historic origin, the facts which can be distinguished among its fancies, and the interests which keep it alive. Such an examination explodes rather than refutes the charge. The accusation vanishes from the the realm of fact, to linger, as the author says, only in minds that live on fiction.

The author's splendid isolation is perhaps responsible,

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however, for certain deficiencies which, in view of what the book otherwise achieves, must be regretted. Probably because Sweden, with its high and equitable standard of living and its low percentage of "strangers," is free from any menace of Jew-hatred, Professor Valentin gives scant space to the practical and intimate details of how anti-Semitism is fostered, not by its blind, honest, or fanatic adherents, but by the political demagogues and the industrial and financial leaders who take profit rather than pride in Jew-baiting. So, too, the author dwells too little on the menace of anti-Semitism to the Gentiles. Since they far outnumber the Jews, it should be made evident that it is the Gentiles who lose most when, in the course of depriving the Jew of his liberties, they must surrender their own. In a literal and ominous sense anti-Semitism is a Gentile problem.

Although the author clearly understands the economic basis of current anti-Semitism, he fails to draw from it either a prognostication or a program for the future. He is, to be sure, shrewd enough to see that nothing the Jews may do as Jews will alter their general lot. Whether they "assimilate" or act with "tactful restraint," whether they cling to their past or create a new future in Palestine, they will not be helped. "For it is not the Jews who are hated but an imaginary image of them." With respect to the Gentiles, "so far as we can see," he says, "this hatred will flourish for generations," to be vanquished only by that messianic reign, dear alike to Christian and Jew, which "lies in the mists of the future."

Yet it seems to a careful reader of this valuable book that hatred for the Jew, with all the evils it brings upon the hater as well as the hated, would vanish tomorrow, as it has vanished from time to time in the past, if we could get the bunga-bunga tree to yield us all enough food and security. Here, it seems to me, lies the chief and immediate task for Jew and Gentile; and if we need example or advice in the husbandry of that tree or in the distribution of its fruits, Professor Valentin's own Sweden can provide us with both.

MARVIN LOWENTHAL

Shorter Notices

WASTE—THE FIGHT TO SAVE AMERICA. By David Cushman Coyle. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 50 cents.

In a brilliantly written little book Mr. Coyle dramatizes the great economic and social waste which characterizes present-day America. The chapters on mud, dust, water, land, and power are superb examples of the art of popularizing technical engineering problems. It is safe to say that no American can read the book and remain indifferent to such problems as soil erosion, flood control, and the conservation of our natural resources. If the chapters on human erosion are somewhat weaker, it is not so much owing to any deficiency in Mr. Coyle's writing skill as to uncertainty regarding the solution. Engineers know how to bind the soil so as to prevent erosion; they can control floods and conserve our natural resources. but if we are to judge by Mr. Coyle's exposition, our social engineers are still in a pick-and-shovel age, prepared to repair but not to prevent the damage wrought by our economic cataclysms.

MAXWELL S. STEWART

THE CONCEPT OF NATURE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH POETRY. By Joseph Warren Beach. The Macmillan Company. $5.

Mr. Beach represents the enthusiasm for nature in certain English poets between Wordsworth and Meredith (and in such foreign poets as Goethe, Emerson, and Whitman) as a substitute for the religion which Europe had been losing since the Renaissance. He is doubtless correct in this, as he is in his diagnosis of poetry since Hardy as revealing both a lack of religion and a lack of any such substitute; for the nineteenth-century concept of nature is in our time wholly gone. If it were not already dead Mr. Beach's dull book would have buried it. It is not so much that Mr. Beach is dull as that his subject is. Much of what he has to tell about what the poets thought, and most of what he quotes from them, is indeed preposterously dull. Their world is well lost, since it was built on nothing but pious hopes. Mr. Beach himself indulges such a hope when at the end he predicts that the poetry of the future will warm itself up again with the social theme. But perhaps the best poetry, now or long ago, can be said to burn with its own inner fire—as the best of Wordsworth does, for instance, whatever Wordsworth may have believed about the hierarchy of creation. Any history of poetry not purely formal in its concern tends to take a vast deal of second-rate verse too seriously because it furnishes proof that certain subjects were "developed" from author to author. This may be interesting as history, but it tells us little or nothing about how first-rate poetry comes here or there into being.

MARK VAN DOREN

NEW PROVINCES. POEMS BY SEVERAL AUTHORS. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

Now out of Canada comes a little book representing various younger poets. Robert Finch, Leo Kennedy, A. M. Klein, E. J. Pratt, F. R. Scott, A. J. M. Smith all have a group of poems in this collection, which reminds one, immediately, of the early collections of the younger English and American poets. Here is poetic criticism of the social system, satirical disillusion; here also the imprint of Eliot and the denial of Eliot's later religious values. Here again is the effort in poetry to use ideas only to make them felt. Of the poets represented Robert Finch appears to be working most carefully with syntax. A. M. Klein fixes upon Jewish life and character the satirical eye of the young T. S. Eliot. F. R. Scott reminds us in his materials of our more ironic and revolutionary poets. Almost all the poets included are attempting to fuse a scientific understanding of the world with a sensuous perception of its significance to man. Much of this poetry is very interesting. Almost none of it is as yet perfectly achieved. But these young poets are working in a new technique and with new materials. And this may be the first book to point the way which Canadian poets are taking. Romanticism is out. The illusion of the importance of the individual is gone. These poets face their world to criticize and to revaluate it.

EDA LOU WALTON

I'M FOR ROOSEVELT. By Joseph P. Kennedy. Reynal and Hitchcock. $1.

The former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, an economist and man of means, tells why he supports President Roosevelt for reelection. Emphasis is laid primarily on economic factors—on the recovery which resulted from devaluation, on the benefits resulting from relief expenditures, and on the salutary effects of the legislation for the regulation of corporate financing. Little is said about the NRA, the silver policy, the Social Security Act, or any other of the more dubious of the New Deal "experiments." Despite these omissions, the main thesis of the book—that Roosevelt has brought recovery—is so well documented that the Republican National Committee would be well advised to ignore it—if it can.

M. S. S.

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Letters to the Editors

Journalistic Distinction

Dear Sirs: The article in your issue of July 16 on Campaign Press Agents was a rather disingenuous fulmination by Paul W. Ward, whose facile presentation obviously wasn't hindered by facts. The article terms Alfred H. Kirchhofer, managing editor of the Buffalo *Evening News* and publicity chief for the Republican national campaign, "a dour fellow of no particular journalistic distinction." Surely Mr. Ward should know that *The Nation* itself, a few years ago, acclaimed a particular journalistic distinction earned by Mr. Kirchhofer. *The Nation,* in naming its selection for *The Nation's* Honor Roll for 1931, chose in the field of journalism: "the Buffalo *Evening News,* for its admirable work in improving conditions that amounted virtually to peonage in the employment and housing of laborers on state public works."

This "admirable work" was conceived and directed by the man whom Mr. Ward airily dismisses as "of no particular journalistic distinction." I know because I was the reporter he assigned to it.

Mr. Ward's article also referred to Mr. Kirchhofer as the man who "runs, as managing editor, a paper, the Buffalo *Evening News,* which is capable of discerning boondoggling in a project to disconnect the sewage-disposal system from a community's water supply." For Mr. Ward's enlightenment there's no sewage-disposal system here to be disconnected from any water supply; the system is just entering preliminary stages of construction. The *News's* fight revolved around political selection of an engineer for the $15,000,000 project. Sufficient to say that the revelations by the *News,* under the aforementioned Mr. Kirchhofer's direction, led Public Works Administrator Harold L. Ickes in Washington to toss overboard the engineer chosen by the local politicians and to divorce the latter completely from any connection with the project.

J. L. MEDDOFF

Buffalo, N. Y., July 29

—and Boondoggling

Dear Sirs: Mr. Meddoff and I are at loggerheads on only one point. We differ as to the meaning of "journalistic distinction." I reserve that category for men such as Ben Stolberg, Louis Stark, Paul Y. Anderson, Heywood Broun, John T. Flynn, and H. N. Brailsford. I doubt that even Mr. Meddoff would put his boss, Mr. Kirchhofer, in that company. Certainly Mr. Kirchhofer's former colleagues in the Washington press corps do not. In fact, what I wrote of him was based squarely on what more than a dozen members of that corps—men who had worked with "Kirk" and liked him—told me of him. I had consulted them because I myself knew Kirchhofer only casually. They were unanimous in picturing him as a meticulous workman, a plugger, without brilliance or any remarkable talent.

As for my reference to the sewage-disposal project, Mr. Meddoff does me something less than justice. I did not have in mind the project to which he refers. If Mr. Meddoff needs to know what I had in mind, I refer him to the paper's "daily boondoggle" series. My reference was merely an attempt briefly to characterize the frequently bizarre nature of the anti-New Deal trend of the news columns over which Mr. Kirchhofer presides.

PAUL W. WARD

Washington, August 30

In Defense of Dr. Kubie

Dear Sirs: I wish to protest that Grace Adams's review of "The Practical Aspects of Psychoanalysis" by Lawrence Kubie is grossly unfair both to Dr. Kubie and to psychoanalysis. Judging by the distortions of its contents that fill each of her paragraphs, I doubt whether Miss Adams has done more than glance through the book with hostility and wilful misunderstanding. Nothing she says about it is entirely true and the half-truths are twisted with malicious stupidity.

ESTHER D. HAMILL

Cambridge, Mass., August 18

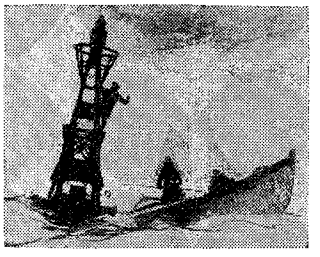
—and of Psychoanalysis

Dear Sirs: Among the book reviews of your issue of August 8 appears the expression of Miss Grace Adams's feelings about my own book. That in her comments she should call me some harsh names is a matter of no moment to anyone else. That she should make this an opportunity to misrepresent and attack psychoanalysis by completely falsifying and distorting the contents of my book is a matter which cannot pass without correction.

In the first place, lest you be misled by her first paragraph into thinking that the book is not an accurate presentation of the subject, I can tell you that up to now all reviews in technical analytic journals have been highly favorable, that Freud wrote to me praising it warmly, and that the International Psychoanalytic Press asked for the translation rights.

Secondly, I would point out that Miss Adams, except for one or two passing thrusts at matters dealt with carefully in earlier chapters, leaps gaily over the entire volume and focuses on the final chapter. By so doing she misses the whole spirit and purpose of the book, and often makes it seem to support the very evils it was in part written to attack.

The book is avowedly written for "prospective patients," in order to make them



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approach analysis cautiously, with open eyes, forewarned against its hardships, its duration, its sacrifices, its expense. Little is said of rewards. Not one glowing picture of a cure is given. Instead of claims, as Miss Adams states, that "everyone who is correctly analyzed by a properly trained Freudian gets well," the reader will find records of mistakes, failures, and obstacles. The isolated position of the analyst is portrayed not as something he arrogates to himself, as Miss Adams implies, but as something which he himself deplores but which is forced upon him by the inexorable facts of practice in this field of medicine. Furthermore, the book describes to the layman those facts which he must seek to know whenever he tries to judge the course and outcome of any particular analysis, thus guiding the "outsider" to a clearer view if he wishes to acquire one.

I could point to many other glaring errors, such as the misrepresentation of the careful discussion of the problem of financing an analytic treatment; and other merely silly comments. It seems to me, however, that I have said enough to prove to you the justification of my protest.

LAURENCE S. KUBIE

Ontario, Can., August 17

Mr. Thomas Loses a Vote

Dear Sirs: In the coming election I, as a liberal favoring "scientific" socialism, would naturally vote for Norman Thomas. But in the United States, where prejudice and propaganda rule over reason, there is little likelihood that a Socialist candidate will be elected, surely not until economic conditions become so acute that my own class, the white-collar class, is compelled to sink its prejudices and to swing its support to the wage-earners, where its economic interests belong.

It follows that if Roosevelt is not reelected, Landon will be elected. Although I am not so beguiled as to believe that Roosevelt is a modern Moses to lead us out of the wilderness of economic and political chaos, I think of him as somewhat less reactionary than the Landon connections. It is a choice between the lesser of two evils—the support of Roosevelt to checkmate reaction—and possibly an American form of fascism.

R. W. G.

Detroit, Mich., August 20

Worm Bites Professor

Dear Sirs: September 8, 1936, is the 125th anniversary of the birth of Francis Bowen, the New England intellectual. His is a unique distinction. He was the only American professor to be ousted for insufficient radicalism. When the worm of "academic freedom" turned, it bit Bowen.

In 1850-51 American sympathies were violently aroused for Kossuth and the Hungarians and their unsuccessful struggle "for Freedom and Democratic Institutions, against the Despotism, Usurpation, and Perfidy of the Austrian empire." The only anti-Hungarian note was struck by Bowen in the *North American Review,* which he edited. Bowen defended the Austrians in his magazine, apologizing for Haynau, Metternich, and the whole reactionary Hapsburg regime.

Our patriots, for once, were indignant at this violation of the American tradition, and they became sore enough to cause Bowen to lose the Maclean chair of history at Harvard. A few years later, of course, he was given another chair at Harvard, but the existence of that almost mythical American genus, the teacher dismissed for reactionary political views, had been definitely established as real, although rare enough to be virtually extinct.

FRANCIS ARMINSON

New York, August 26

CONTRIBUTORS

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH has recently returned from a visit to England and France, where he talked with T. S. Eliot, Rebecca West, Bertrand Russell, André Malraux, Ralph Fox, and other leading literary figures. These interviews will be incorporated in a series of four articles beginning in this issue.

M. E. RAVAGE, author of "The Malady of Europe," has traveled as a journalist throughout Western and Central Europe and is now in Paris as *The Nation's* French correspondent.

JOHANN SCHMIDT is the pseudonym of a German business man who spent six months in the concentration camp described in Sojourn in Hell. On his release he came to this country.

JOHN STEINBECK has received critical acclaim for two very different books during the last year. The first, "Tortilla Flat," was a romantic love story laid in Mexico; the second, "In Dubious Battle," was a proletarian novel dealing with a strike among California apple-pickers.

WILLIAM TROY, a frequent book reviewer for *The Nation,* is on the English faculty of Bennington College.

PHILIP RAHV is one of the editors of the *Partisan Review and Anvil,* a radical literary journal.

MARVIN LOWENTHAL has recently published "The Jews of Germany," a historical study of particular timeliness. His earlier book, "A World Passed By," dealt with Jewish civilizations in Europe and North Africa.

CARLETON BEALS, author of "Mexican Maze," a life of Porfirio Díaz, and other books, is a journalist who has visited and written about many countries of Latin America. In 1928 he contributed to *The Nation* firsthand accounts of Sandino's revolt in Nicaragua.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER, editor of "An Anthology of Light Verse" and more recently of "An Eighteenth Century Miscellany," is one of New York's leading book critics.

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